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MEMOIRS OF
LOUIS XIV
AND OF

WHEN ALL WAS EXAMINED,
THE KING'S SEAL, AND THAT OF THE AMBASSADOR,
WERE PUT UPON
ALL THE BUREAUX AND THE CASKETS
WHICH CONTAINED PAPERS

—p. 1119

From the painting by Maurice Leloir

MEMOIRS OF
LOUIS XIV AND HIS COURT
AND OF THE REGENCY

BY THE DUKE OF SAINT-SIMON

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOLUME II

WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION
AND ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME IX

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER LIX

PAGE

Warnings to the Dauphin and the Dauphine.—The Dauphine Sickens and Dies.—Illness of the Dauphin.—His Death.—Character and Manners of the Dauphine.—And of the Dauphin 711

CHAPTER LX

Certainty of Poison.—The Supposed Criminal.—Excitement of the People against M. d'Orléans.—The Cabal.—My Danger and Escape.—The Dauphin's Casket 727

CHAPTER LXI

The King's Selfishness.—Defeat of the Czar.—Death of Catinat.—Last Days of Vendôme.—His Body at the Escurial.—Anecdote of Harlay and the Jacobins.—Truce in Flanders.—Wolves 740

CHAPTER LXII

Settlement of the Spanish Succession.—Renunciation of France.—Comic Failure of the Duc de Berry.—Anecdotes of M. de Chevreuse.—Father Daniel's History and Its Reward 751

CHAPTER LXIII

The Bull *Unigenitus*.—My Interview with Father Tellier.—Curious Inadvertence of Mine.—Peace.—Duc de la Rochefoucauld.—A Suicide in Public.—Charmel.—Two Gay Sisters 764

CHAPTER LXIV

The King of Spain a Widower.—Intrigues of Madame des Ursins.—Choice of the Princes of Parma.—The King of France Kept in the Dark.—Celebration of the Marriage.—Sudden Fall of the Princesse des Ursins.—Her Expulsion from Spain 777

CONTENTS

CHAPTER LXV

PAGE

The King of Spain Acquiesces in the Disgrace of Madame des Ursins.—Its Origin.—Who Struck the Blow.—Her Journey to Versailles.—Treatment There.—My Interview with Her.—She Retires to Genoa.—Then to Rome.—Dies 795

CHAPTER LXVI

Sudden Illness of the Duc de Berry.—Suspicious Symptoms.—The Duchess Prevented from Seeing Him.—His Death.—Character.—Manners of the Duchesse de Berry . . 806

CHAPTER LXVII

Maisons Seeks My Acquaintance.—His Mysterious Manner.—Increase of the Intimacy.—Extraordinary News.—The Bastards Declared Princes of the Blood.—Rage of Maisons and Noailles.—Opinion of the Court and Country . . 814

CHAPTER LXVIII

The King Unhappy and Ill at Ease.—Court Paid to Him.—A New Scheme to Rule Him.—He Yields.—New Annoyance.—His Will.—Anecdotes Concerning It.—Opinions of the Court.—M. du Maine 821

CHAPTER LXIX

A New Visit from Maisons.—His Violent Project.—My Objections.—He Persists.—His Death and That of His Wife.—Death of the Duc de Beauvilliers.—His Character.—Of the Cardinal d'Estrées.—Anecdotes.—Death of Fénelon . 833

CHAPTER LXX

Character and Position of the Duc d'Orléans.—His Manners, Talents, and Virtues.—His Weakness.—Anecdote Illustrative Thereof.—The "Débonnaire."—Adventure of the Grand Prieur in England.—Education of the Duc d'Orléans.—Character of Dubois.—His Pernicious Influence.—The Duke's Emptiness.—His Deceit.—His Love of Painting.—The Fairies at His Birth.—The Duke's Timidity.—An Instance of His Mistrustfulness . . . 845

CONTENTS

CHAPTER LXXI

PAGE

The Duke Tries to Raise the Devil.—Magical Experiments.—His Religious Opinions.—Impiety.—Reads Rabelais at Church.—The Duchesse d'Orléans.—Her Character.—Her Life with Her Husband.—My Discourses with the Duke on the Future.—My Plans of Government.—A Place at Choice Offered Me.—I Decline the Honour.—My Reason.—National Bankruptcy.—The Duke's Anger at My Refusal.—A Final Decision 860

CHAPTER LXXII

The King's Health Declines.—Bets about His Death.—Lord Stair.—My New Friend.—The King's Last Hunt.—And Last Domestic and Public Acts.—Doctors.—Opium.—The King's Diet.—Failure of His Strength.—His Hopes of Recovery.—Increased Danger.—Codicil to His Will.—Interview with the Duc d'Orléans.—With the Cardinal de Noailles.—Address to His Attendants.—The Dauphin Brought to Him.—His Last Words.—An Extraordinary Physician.—The Courtiers and the Duc d'Orléans.—Conduct of Madame de Maintenon.—The King's Death . . 869

CHAPTER LXXIII

Early Life of Louis XIV.—His Education.—His Enormous Vanity.—His Ignorance.—Cause of the War with Holland.—His Mistakes and Weakness in War.—The Ruin of France.—Origin of Versailles.—The King's Love of Adulation, and Jealousy of People Who Came Not to Court.—His Spies.—His Vindictiveness.—Opening of Letters.—Confidence Sometimes Placed in Him.—A Lady in a Predicament 885

CHAPTER LXXIV

Excessive Politeness.—Influence of the Valets.—How the King Drove Out.—Love of Magnificence.—His Buildings.—Versailles.—The Supply of Water.—The King Seeks for Quiet.—Creation of Marly.—Tremendous Extravagance . 896

CHAPTER LXXV

Amours of the King.—La Vallière.—Montespan.—Scandalous Publicity.—Temper of Madame de Montespan.—Her Unbearable Haughtiness.—Other Mistresses.—Madame de

CONTENTS

PAGE

Maintenon.—Her Fortunes.—Her Marriage with Scarron.—His Character and Society.—How She Lived After His Death.—Gets into Better Company.—Acquaintance with Madame de Montespan.—The King's Children.—His Dislike of Widow Scarron.—Purchase of the Maintenon Estate.—Further Demands.—M. du Maine on His Travels.—Montespan's Ill-humour.—Madame de Maintenon Supplants Her.—Her Bitter Annoyance.—Progress of the New Intrigue.—Marriage of the King and Madame de Maintenon 902

CHAPTER LXXVI

Character of Madame de Maintenon.—Her Conversation.—Her Narrow-mindedness.—Her Devotion.—Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.—Its Fatal Consequences.—Saint-Cyr.—Madame de Maintenon Desires Her Marriage to be Declared.—Her Schemes.—Counterworked by Louvois.—His Vigorous Conduct and Sudden Death.—Behaviour of the King.—Extraordinary Death of Séron 912

CHAPTER LXXVII

Daily Occupations of Madame de Maintenon.—Her Policy.—How She Governed the King's Affairs.—Connivance with the Ministers.—Anecdote of Le Tellier.—Behaviour of the King to Madame de Maintenon.—His Hardness.—Selfishness.—Want of Thought for Others.—Anecdotes.—Resignation of the King.—Its Causes.—The Jesuits and the Doctors.—The King and Lay Jesuits 923

CHAPTER LXXVIII

External Life of Louis XIV.—At the Army.—Etiquette of the King's Table.—Court Manners and Customs.—The Rising of the King.—Morning Occupations.—Secret Amours.—Going to Mass.—Councils.—Thursdays.—Fridays. — Ceremony of the King's Dinner. — The King's Brother.—After Dinner.—The Drive.—Walks at Marly and Elsewhere.—Stag-hunting.—Play-tables.—Lotteries.—Visits to Madame de Maintenon.—Supper.—The King Retires to Rest.—Medicine Days.—King's Religious Observances.—Fervency in Lent.—At Mass.—Costume.—Politeness of the King for the Court of Saint-Germain.—Feelings of the Court at His Death.—Relief of Madame de Maintenon.—Of the Duchesse d'Orléans.—Of the Court Generally.—Joy of Paris and the Whole of France.—Decency of Foreigners.—Burial of the King 933

CONTENTS

CHAPTER LXXIX

PAGE

Surprise of M. d'Orléans at the King's Death.—My Interview with Him.—Dispute about Hats.—M. du Maine at the Parliament.—His Reception.—My Protest.—The King's Will.—Its Contents and Reception.—Speech of the Duc d'Orléans.—Its Effect.—His Speech on the Codicil.—Violent Discussion.—Curious Scene.—Interruption for Dinner.—Return to the Parliament.—Abrogation of the Codicil.—New Scheme of Government.—The Regent Visits Madame de Maintenon.—The Establishment of Saint-Cyr.—The Regent's Liberality to Madame de Maintenon . . 948

CHAPTER LXXX

The Young King's Cold.—*Lettres de Cachet* Revived.—A Melancholy Story.—A Loan from Crosat.—Retrenchments.—Unpaid Ambassadors.—Council of the Regency.—Influence of Lord Stair.—The Pretender.—His Departure from Bar.—Colonel Douglas.—The Pursuit.—Adventure at Nonancourt.—Its Upshot.—Madame l'Hospital.—Ingratitude of the Pretender 962

CHAPTER LXXXI

Behaviour of the Duchesse de Berry.—Her Arrogance Checked by Public Opinion.—Walls up the Luxembourg Garden.—La Muette.—Her Strange Amour with Rion.—Extraordinary Details.—The Duchess at the Carmelites.—Weakness of the Regent.—His Daily Round of Life.—His Suppers.—How He Squandered His Time.—His Impenetrability.—Scandal of His Life.—Public Balls at the Opera 974

CHAPTER LXXXII

First Appearance of Law.—His Banking Project Supported by the Regent.—Discussed by the Regent with Me.—Approved by the Council and Registered.—My Interviews with Law.—His Reasons for Seeking My Friendship.—Arouet de Voltaire 982

CHAPTER LXXXIII

Rise of Alberoni.—Intimacy of France and England.—Gibraltar Proposed to be Given Up.—Louville the Agent.—His Departure.—Arrives at Madrid.—Alarm of Albe-

CONTENTS

PAGE

roni.—His Audacious Intrigues.—Louville in the Bath.—His Attempts to See the King.—Defeated.—Driven Out of Spain.—Impudence of Alberoni.—Treaty between France and England.—Stipulation with Reference to the Pretender 989

CHAPTER LXXXIV

The Lieutenant of Police.—Jealousy of Parliament.—Arrest of Pomereu Resolved On.—His Imprisonment and Sudden Release.—Proposed Destruction of Marly.—How I Prevented It.—Sale of the Furniture.—I Obtain the *Grandes Entrées*.—Their Importance and Nature.—Afterwards Lavished Indiscriminately.—Adventure of the Diamond called "The Regent."—Bought for the Crown of France 998

CHAPTER LXXXV

Death of the Duchesse de Lesdiguières.—Cavoye and His Wife.—Peter the Great.—His Visit to France.—Enmity to England.—Its Cause.—Kourakin, the Russian Ambassador.—The Czar Studies Rome.—Makes Himself the Head of Religion.—New Desires for Rome.—Ultimately Suppressed.—Preparations to Receive the Czar at Paris.—His Arrival at Dunkerque.—At Beaumont.—Dislikes the Fine Quarters Provided for Him.—His Singular Manners, and Those of His Suite 1008

CHAPTER LXXXVI

Personal Appearance of the Czar.—His Meals.—Invited by the Regent.—His Interview with the King.—He Returns the Visit.—Excursion in Paris.—Visits Madame.—Drinks Beer at the Opera.—At the Invalides.—Meudon.—Issy.—The Tuileries.—Versailles.—Hunt at Fontainebleau.—Saint-Cyr.—Extraordinary Interview with Madame de Maintenon.—My Meeting with the Czar at D'Antin's.—The Ladies Crowd to See Him.—Interchange of Presents.—A Review.—Party Visits.—Desire of the Czar to Be United to France 1017

CHAPTER LXXXVII

Courson in Languedoc.—Complaints of Perigueux.—Deputies to Paris.—Disunion at the Council.—Intrigues of the Duc de Noailles.—Scene.—I Support the Perigueux People.—Triumph.—My Quarrel with Noailles.—The Order of the Pavilion 1027

CONTENTS

CHAPTER LXXXVIII

PAGE

Policy and Schemes of Alberoni.—He is Made a Cardinal.—Other Rewards Bestowed on Him.—Dispute with the Majordomo.—An Irruption into the Royal Apartment.—The Cardinal Thrashed.—Extraordinary Scene . . . 1035

CHAPTER LXXXIX

Anecdote of the Duc d'Orléans.—He Pretends to Reform.—Trick Played upon Me.—His Hoaxes.—His Panegyric of Me.—Madame de Sabran.—How the Regent Treated His Mistresses 1041

CHAPTER XC

Encroachments of the Parliament.—The Money Edict.—Conflict of Powers.—Vigorous Conduct of the Parliament.—Opposed with Equal Vigour by the Regent.—Anecdote of the Duchesse du Maine.—Further Proceedings of the Parliament.—Influence of the Reading of Memoirs.—Conduct of the Regent.—My Political Attitude.—Conversation with the Regent on the Subject of the Parliament.—Proposal to Hang Law.—Meeting at My House.—Law Takes Refuge in the Palais Royal . 1046

CHAPTER XCI

Proposed Bed of Justice.—My Scheme.—Interview with the Regent.—The Necessary Seats for the Assembly.—I Go in Search of Fontanieu.—My Interview with Him.—I Return to the Palace.—Preparations.—Proposals of M. le Duc to Degrade M. du Maine.—My Opposition.—My Joy and Delight.—The Bed of Justice Finally Determined On.—A Charming Messenger.—Final Preparations.—Illness of the Regent.—News Given to M. du Maine.—Resolution of the Parliament.—Military Arangements.—I Am Summoned to the Council.—My Message to the Comte de Toulouse 1057

CHAPTER XCII

The Material Preparations for the Bed of Justice.—Arrival of the Duc d'Orléans.—The Council Chamber.—Attitude of the Various Actors.—The Duc du Maine.—Various Movements.—Arrival of the Duc de Toulouse.—Anxiety

CONTENTS

PAGE

of the Two Bastards.—They Leave the Room.—Subsequent Proceedings.—Arrangement of the Council Chamber.—Speech of the Regent.—Countenances of the Members of Council.—The Regent Explains the Object of the Bed of Justice.—Speech of the Keeper of the Seals.—Taking the Votes.—Incidents That Followed.—New Speech of the Duc d'Orléans.—Against the Bastards.—My Joy.—I Express My Opinion Modestly.—Exception in Favour of the Comte de Toulouse.—New Proposal of M. le Duc.—Its Effect.—Threatened Disobedience of the Parliament.—Proper Measures.—The Parliament Sets Out 1070

CHAPTER XCIII

Continuation of the Scene in the Council Chamber.—Slowness of the Parliament.—They Arrive at Last.—The King Fetched.—Commencement of the Bed of Justice.—My Arrival.—Its Effect.—What I Observed.—Absence of the Bastards Noticed.—Appearance of the King.—The Keeper of the Seals.—The Proceedings Opened.—Humiliation of the Parliament.—Speech of the Chief-President.—New Announcement.—Fall of the Duc du Maine Announced.—Rage of the Chief-President.—My Extreme Joy.—M. le Duc Substituted for M. du Maine.—Indifference of the King.—Registration of the Decrees . . 1092

CHAPTER XCIV

My Return Home.—Wanted for a New Commission.—Go to the Palais Royal.—A Cunning Page.—My Journey to Saint-Cloud.—My Reception.—Interview with the Duchesse d'Orléans.—Her Grief.—My Embarrassment.—Interview with Madame.—Her Triumph.—Letter of the Duchesse d'Orléans.—She Comes to Paris.—Quarrels with the Regent 1107

CHAPTER XCV

Intrigues of M. du Maine.—And of Cellamare, the Spanish Ambassador.—Monteléon and Portocarrero.—Their Despatches.—How Signed.—The Conspiracy Revealed.—Conduct of the Regent.—Arrest of Cellamare.—His House Searched.—The Regency Council.—Speech of the Duc d'Orléans.—Resolutions Come To.—Arrests.—Relations with Spain.—Alberoni and Saint-Aignan.—Their Quarrel.—Escape of Saint-Aignan 1115

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XCVI

PAGE

The Regent Sends for Me.—Guilt of the Duc du Maine.—Proposed Arrest.—Discussion on the Prison to Be Chosen.—The Arrest.—His Dejection.—Arrest of the Duchess.—Her Rage.—Taken to Dijon.—Other Arrests.—Conduct of the Comte de Toulouse.—The *Faux Sauniers*.—Imprisonment of the Duc and Duchesse du Maine.—Their Sham Disagreement.—Their Liberation.—Their Reconciliation 1124

CHAPTER XCVII

Anecdote of Madame de Charlus.—The *Philippiques*.—La Grange.—Père Tellier.—The Jesuits.—Anecdote.—Tellier's Banishment.—Death of Madame de Maintenon.—Her Life at Saint-Cyr 1134

CHAPTER XCVIII

Mode of Life of the Duchesse de Berry.—Her Illness.—Her Degrading Amours.—Her Danger Increases.—The Sacraments Refused.—The Curé Is Supported by the Cardinal de Noailles.—Curious Scene.—The Duchess Refuses to Give Way.—She Recovers, and Is Delivered.—Ambition of Rion.—He Marries the Duchess.—She Determines to Go to Meudon.—Rion Sent to the Army.—Quarrels of Father and Daughter.—Supper on the Terrace of Meudon.—The Duchess Again Ill.—Moves to La Muette.—Great Danger.—Receives the Sacrament.—Garus and Chirac.—Rival Doctors.—Increased Illness.—Death of the Duchess.—Sentiments on the Occasion.—Funeral Ceremonies.—Madame de Saint-Simon Falls Ill.—Her Recovery.—We Move to Meudon.—Character of the Duchesse de Berry 1142

CHAPTER XCIX

The Mississippi Scheme.—Law Offers Me Shares.—Compensation for Blaye.—The Rue Quincampoix.—Excitement of the Public.—Increased Popularity of the Scheme.—Conniving of Law.—Plot against His Life.—Disagreement with Argenson.—Their Quarrel.—Avarice of the Prince de Conti.—His Audacity.—Anger of the Regent.—Comparison with the Period of Louis XIV.—A Ballet Proposed.—The Maréchal de Villeroy.—The Young

CONTENTS

PAGE

King Is to Dance.—Young Law Proposed.—Excitement.—The Young King's Disgust.—Extravagant Presents of the Duc d'Orléans 1159

CHAPTER C

System of Law in Danger.—Prodigality of the Duc d'Orléans.—Admissions of Law.—Fall of His Notes.—Violent Measures Taken to Support Them.—Their Failure.—Increased Extravagance of the Regent.—Reduction of the Fervour.—Proposed Colonies.—Forced Emigration.—Decree on the Indian Company.—Scheming of Argenson.—Attitude of the Parliament.—Their Remonstrance.—Dismissal of Law.—His Coolness.—Extraordinary Decree of the Council of State.—Prohibition of Jewellery.—New Schemes 1170

CHAPTER CI

The New Edict.—The Commercial Company.—New Edict.—Rush on the Bank.—People Stifled in the Crowd.—Excitement against Law.—Money of the Bank.—Exile of the Parliament to Pontoise.—New Operation.—The Place Vendôme.—The Maréchal de Villeroy.—Marseilles.—Flight of Law.—Character of Him and His Wife.—Observations on His Schemes.—Decrees of the Finance 1180

CHAPTER CII

Council on the Finances.—Departure of Law.—A Strange Dialogue.—M. le Duc and the Regent.—Crimes Imputed to Law during His Absence.—Schemes Proposed.—End of the Council 1190

CHAPTER CIII

Character of Alberoni.—His Grand Projects.—Plots against Him.—The Queen's Nurse.—The Scheme against the Cardinal.—His Fall.—Theft of a Will.—Reception in Italy.—His Adventures There 1196

CHAPTER CIV

Meetings of the Council.—A Kitten.—The Archbishopric of Cambrai.—Scandalous Conduct of Dubois.—The Consecration.—I Persuade the Regent Not to Go.—He Promises Not.—Breaks His Word.—Madame de Parabère.—The Ceremony.—Story of the Comte de Horn . 1204

CONTENTS

CHAPTER CV

PAGE

Quarrel of the King of England with His Son.—Schemes of Dubois.—Marriage of Brissac.—His Death.—Birth of the Young Pretender.—Cardinalate of Dubois.—Illness of the King.—His Convalescence.—A Wonderful Lesson.—Prudence of the Regent.—Insinuations against Him . 1217

CHAPTER CVI

Projected Marriages of the King and of the Daughter of the Duc d'Orléans.—How It Was Communicated to Me.—I Ask for the Embassy to Spain.—It Is Granted to Me.—Jealousy of Dubois.—His Petty Interference.—Announcement of the Marriages 1227

CHAPTER CVII

Interview with Dubois.—His Singular Instructions to Me.—His Insidious Object.—Various Tricks and Manœuvres.—My Departure for Spain.—Journey by Way of Bordeaux and Bayonne.—Reception in Spain.—Arrival at Madrid 1235

CHAPTER CVIII

Interview in the Hall of Mirrors.—Preliminaries of the Marriages.—Grimaldo.—How the Question of Precedence Was Settled.—I Ask for an Audience.—Splendid Illuminations.—A Ball.—I Am Forced to Dance . . 1246

CHAPTER CIX

Mademoiselle de Montpensier Sets out for Spain.—I Carry the News to the King.—Set out for Lerma.—Stay at the Escurial.—Take the Small-pox.—Convalescence . . 1256

CHAPTER CX

Mode of Life of Their Catholic Majesties.—Their Night.—Morning.—Toilette.—Character of Philippe V.—And of His Queen.—How She Governed Him 1265

CONTENTS

CHAPTER CXI

PAGE

The King's Taste for Hunting.—Preparations for a Battue.—Dull Work.—My Plans to Obtain the Grandesse.—Treachery of Dubois.—Friendship of Grimaldo.—My Success 1276

CHAPTER CXII

Marriage of the Prince of the Asturias.—An Ignorant Cardinal.—I Am Made Grandee of Spain.—The Vidâme de Chartres Named Chevalier of the Golden Fleece.—His Reception.—My Adieux.—A Belching Princess.—Return to France 1285

CHAPTER CXIII

Attempted Reconciliation between Dubois and Villeroy.—Violent Scene.—Trap Laid for the Maréchal.—Its Success.—His Arrest 1301

CHAPTER CXIV

I Am Sent for by Cardinal Dubois.—Flight of Fréjus.—He Is Sought and Found.—Behaviour of Villeroy in His Exile at Lyons.—His Rage and Reproaches against Fréjus.—Rise of the Latter in the King's Confidence . . . 1316

CHAPTER CXV

I Retire from Public Life.—Illness and Death of Dubois.—Account of His Riches.—His Wife.—His Character.—Anecdotes.—Madame de Conflans.—Relief of the Regent and the King 1325

CHAPTER CXVI

Death of Lauzun.—His Extraordinary Adventures.—His Success at Court.—Appointment to the Artillery.—Counter-worked by Louvois.—Lauzun and Madame de Montespan.—Scene with the King.—Mademoiselle and Madame de Monaco 1344

CONTENTS

CHAPTER CXVII

PAGE

Lauzun's Magnificence.—Louvois Conspires against Him.—He Is Imprisoned.—His Adventures at Pignerol.—On What Terms He Is Released.—His Life Afterwards.—Return to Court 1353

CHAPTER CXVIII

Lauzun Regrets His Former Favour.—Means Taken to Recover It.—Failure.—Anecdotes.—Biting Sayings.—My Intimacy with Lauzun.—His Illness, Death, and Character 1362

CHAPTER CXIX

Ill-Health of the Regent.—My Fears.—He Desires a Sudden Death.—Apoplectic Fit.—Death.—His Successor as Prime Minister.—The Duc de Chartres.—End of the Memoirs 1376

CHAPTER LIX

ON Monday, the 18th of January, 1712, after a visit to Versailles, the King went to Marly. I mark expressly this journey. No sooner were we settled there than Boudin, chief doctor of the Dauphine, warned her to take care of herself, as he had received sure information that there was a plot to poison her and the Dauphin, to whom he made a similar communication. Not content with this he repeated it with a terrified manner to everybody in the *salon,* and frightened all who listened to him. The King spoke to him about it in private. Boudin declared that this information was good, and yet that he did not know whence it came; and he stuck to this contradiction. For, if he did not know where the information came from how could he be assured it was trustworthy?

The most singular thing is, that twenty-four hours after Boudin had uttered this warning, the Dauphin received a similar one from the King of Spain, vague, and without mentioning whence obtained, and yet also declared to be of good source. In this only the Dauphin was named distinctly—the Dauphine obscurely and by implication—at least, so the Dauphin explained the matter, and I never heard that he said otherwise. People pretended to despise these stories of origin unknown, but they were struck by them nevertheless, and in the midst of the amusements and occupations of the Court, seriousness, silence, and consternation were spread.

The King, as I have said, went to Marly on Monday,

the 18th of January, 1712. The Dauphine came there early with a face very much swelled, and went to bed at once; yet she rose at seven o'clock in the evening, because the King wished her to preside in the *salon*. She played there, in morning dress, with her head wrapped up, visited the King in the apartment of Madame de Maintenon just before his supper, and then again went to bed, where she supped. On the morrow, the 19th, she rose only to play in the *salon*, and see the King, returning to her bed and supping there. On the 20th, her swelling diminished, and she was better. She was subject to this complaint, which was caused by her teeth. She passed the following days as usual. On Monday, the 1st of February, the Court returned to Versailles.

On Friday, the 5th of February, the Duc de Noailles gave a very fine box full of excellent Spanish snuff to the Dauphine, who took some, and liked it. This was towards the end of the morning. Upon entering her cabinet (closed to everybody else), she put this box upon the table, and left it there. Towards the evening she was seized with trembling fits of fever. She went to bed, and could not rise again even to go to the King's cabinet after the supper. On Saturday, the 6th of February, the Dauphine, who had had fever all night, did not fail to rise at her ordinary hour, and to pass the day as usual; but in the evening the fever returned. She was but middling all that night, a little worse the next day; but towards ten o'clock at night she was suddenly seized by a sharp pain under the temple. It did not extend to the dimensions of a ten sous piece, but was so violent that she begged the King, who was coming to see her, not to enter. This kind of madness of suffering lasted without intermission until Monday, the 8th, and was proof against tobacco chewed and smoked, a quantity of opium, and

two bleedings in the arms. Fever showed itself more when this pain was a little calmed; the Dauphine said she had suffered more than in child-birth.

Such a violent illness filled the chamber with rumours concerning the snuff-box given to the Dauphine by the Duc de Noailles. In going to bed the day she had received it and was seized by fever, she spoke of the snuff to her ladies, highly praising it and the box, which she told one of them to go and look for upon the table in the cabinet, where, as I have said, it had been left. The box could not be found, although looked for high and low. This disappearance had seemed very extraordinary from the first moment it became known. Now, joined to the grave illness with which the Dauphine was so cruelly assailed, it aroused the most sombre suspicions. Nothing, however, was breathed of these suspicions, beyond a very restricted circle; for the Princess took snuff with the knowledge of Madame de Maintenon, but without that of the King, who would have made a fine scene if he had discovered it. This was what was feared, if the singular loss of the box became divulged.

Let me here say, that although one of my friends, the Archbishop of Rheims, believed to his dying day that the Duc de Noailles had poisoned the Dauphine by means of this box of Spanish snuff, I never could induce myself to believe so too. The Archbishop declared that in the manner of the Duc de Noailles, after quitting the chamber of the Princess, there was something which suggested both confusion and contentment. He brought forward other proofs of guilt, but they made no impression upon me. I endeavoured, on the contrary, to shake his belief, but my labour was in vain. I entreated him, however, at least to maintain the most profound silence upon this horrible thought, and he did so.

Those who afterwards knew the history of the box—and they were in good number—were as inaccessible to suspicion as I; and nobody thought of charging the Duc de Noailles with the offence it was said he had committed. As for me, I believed in his guilt so little that our intimacy remained the same; and although that intimacy grew even up to the death of the King, we never spoke of this fatal snuff-box.

During the night, from Monday to Tuesday, the 9th of February, the lethargy was great. During the day the King approached the bed many times: the fever was strong, the awakenings were short; the head was confused, and some marks upon the skin gave tokens of measles, because they extended quickly, and because many people at Versailles and at Paris were known to be, at this time, attacked with that disease. The night from Tuesday to Wednesday passed so much the more badly, because the hope of measles had already vanished. The King came in the morning to see Madame la Dauphine, to whom an emetic had been given. It operated well, but produced no relief. The Dauphin, who scarcely ever left the bedside of his wife, was forced into the garden to take the air, of which he had much need; but his disquiet led him back immediately into the chamber. The malady increased towards the evening, and at eleven o'clock there was a considerable augmentation of fever. The night was very bad. On Thursday, the 11th of February, at nine o'clock in the morning, the King entered the Dauphine's chamber, which Madame de Maintenon scarcely ever left, except when he was in her apartments. The Princess was so ill that it was resolved to speak to her of receiving the sacrament. Prostrated though she was she was surprised at this. She put some questions as to her state; replies as little terrifying as possible were given to her, and little by

little she was warned against delay. Grateful for this advice, she said she would prepare herself.

After some time, accidents being feared, Father la Rue, her (Jesuit) confessor, whom she had always appeared to like, approached her to exhort her not to delay confession. She looked at him, replied that she understood him, and then remained silent. Like a sensible man he saw what was the matter, and at once said that if she had any objection to confess to him to have no hesitation in admitting it. Thereupon she indicated that she should like to have M. Bailly, priest of the mission of the parish of Versailles. He was a man much esteemed, but not altogether free from the suspicion of Jansenism. Bailly, as it happened, had gone to Paris. This being told her, the Dauphine asked for Father Noël, who was instantly sent for.

The excitement that this change of confessor made at a moment so critical may be imagined. All the cruelty of the tyranny that the King never ceased to exercise over every member of his family was now apparent. They could not have a confessor not of his choosing! What was his surprise and the surprise of all the Court, to find that in these last terrible moments of life the Dauphine wished to change her confessor, whose Order even she repudiated!

Meanwhile the Dauphin had given way. He had hidden his own illness as long as he could, so as not to leave the pillow of his Dauphine. Now the fever he had was too strong to be dissimulated; and the doctors, who wished to spare him the sight of the horrors they foresaw, forgot nothing to induce him to stay in his chamber, where, to sustain him, false news was, from time to time, brought him of the state of his spouse.

The confession of the Dauphine was long. Extreme unction was administered immediately afterwards; and

the holy viaticum directly. An hour afterwards the Dauphine desired the prayers for the dying to be said. They told her she was not yet in that state, and with words of consolation exhorted her to try and get to sleep. Seven doctors of the Court and of Paris were sent for. They consulted together in the presence of the King and Madame de Maintenon. All with one voice were in favour of bleeding at the foot; and in case it did not have the effect desired, to give an emetic at the end of the night. The bleeding was executed at seven o'clock in the evening. The return of the fever came and was found less violent than the preceding. The night was cruel. The King came early next morning to see the Dauphine. The emetic she took at about nine o'clock had little effect. The day passed in symptoms each more sad than the other; consciousness only at rare intervals. All at once towards evening, the whole chamber fell into dismay. A number of people were allowed to enter although the King was there. Just before she expired he left, mounted into his coach at the foot of the grand staircase, and with Madame de Maintenon and Madame de Caylus went away to Marly. They were both in the most bitter grief, and had not the courage to go to the Dauphin. Upon arriving at Marly the King supped in his own room; and passed a short time with M. d'Orléans and his natural children. M. le Duc de Berry, entirely occupied with his affliction, which was great and real, had remained at Versailles with Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who, transported with joy upon seeing herself delivered from a powerful rival, to whom, however, she owed all, made her face do duty for her heart.

Monseigneur le Dauphin, ill and agitated by the most bitter grief, kept his chamber; but on Saturday morning the 13th, being pressed to go to Marly to

avoid the horror of the noise overhead where the Dauphine was lying dead, he set out for that place at seven o'clock in the morning. Shortly after arriving he heard mass in the chapel, and thence was carried in a chair to the window of one of his rooms. Madame de Maintenon came to see him there afterwards; the anguish of the interview was speedily too much for her, and she went away. Early in the morning I went uninvited to see M. le Dauphin. He showed me that he perceived this with an air of gentleness and of affection which penetrated me. But I was terrified with his looks, constrained, fixed and with something wild about them, with the change in his face and with the marks there, livid rather than red, that I observed in good number and large; marks observed by the others also. The Dauphin was standing. In a few minutes he was apprised that the King had awaked. The tears that he had restrained, now rolled from his eyes; he turned round at the news but said nothing, remaining stock still. His three attendants proposed to him, once or twice, that he should go to the King. He neither spoke nor stirred. I approached and made signs to him to go, then softly spoke to the same effect. Seeing that he still remained speechless and motionless, I made bold to take his arm, representing to him that sooner or later he must see the King, who expected him, and assuredly with the desire to see and embrace him; and pressing him in this manner, I took the liberty to gently push him. He cast upon me a look that pierced my soul and went away. I followed him some few steps and then withdrew to recover breath; I never saw him again. May I, by the mercy of God, see him eternally where God's goodness doubtless has placed him!

The Dauphin reached the chamber of the King, full just then of company. As soon as he appeared the

King called him and embraced him tenderly again and again. These first moments, so touching, passed in words broken by sobs and tears.

Shortly afterwards the King looking at the Dauphin was terrified by the same things that had previously struck me with affright. Everybody around was so, also the doctors more than the others. The King ordered them to feel his pulse; that they found bad, so they said afterwards; for the time they contented themselves with saying it was not regular, and that the Dauphin would do wisely to go to bed. The King embraced him again, recommended him very tenderly to take care of himself, and ordered him to go to bed. He obeyed and rose no more!

It was now late in the morning. The King had passed a cruel night and had a bad headache; he saw at his dinner, the few courtiers who presented themselves, and after dinner went to the Dauphin. The fever had augmented: the pulse was worse than before. The King passed into the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, and the Dauphin was left with his attendants and his doctors. He spent the day in prayers and holy reading.

On the morrow, Sunday, the uneasiness felt on account of the Dauphin augmented. He himself did not conceal his belief that he should never rise again, and that the plot Boudin had warned him of, had been executed. He explained himself to this effect more than once, and always with a disdain of earthly grandeur and an incomparable submission and love of God. It is impossible to describe the general consternation. On Monday the 15th, the King was bled. The Dauphin was no better than before. The King and Madame de Maintenon saw him separately several times during the day, which was passed in prayers and reading.

On Tuesday, the 16th, the Dauphin was worse. He felt himself devoured by a consuming fire, which the external fever did not seem to justify; but the pulse was very extraordinary and exceedingly menacing. This was a deceptive day. The marks on the Dauphin's face extended over all the body. They were regarded as the marks of measles. Hope arose thereon, but the doctors and the most clear-sighted of the Court could not forget that these same marks had shown themselves on the body of the Dauphine; a fact unknown out of her chamber until after death.

On Wednesday, the 17th, the malady considerably increased. I had news at all moments of the Dauphin's state from Cheverny, an excellent apothecary of the King and of my family. He hid nothing from us. He had told us what he thought of the Dauphine's illness; he told us now what he thought of the Dauphin's. I no longer hoped therefore, or rather I hoped to the end, against all hope.

On Wednesday the pains increased. They were like a devouring fire, but more violent than ever. Very late into the evening the Dauphin sent to the King for permission to receive the communion early the next morning, without ceremony and without display, at the mass performed in his chamber. Nobody heard of this, that evening; it was not known until the following morning. I was in extreme desolation; I scarcely saw the King once a day. I did nothing but go in quest of news several times a day, and to the house of M. de Chevreuse, where I was completely free. M. de Chevreuse—always calm, always sanguine—endeavoured to prove to us by his medical reasonings that there was more reason to hope than to fear, but he did so with a tranquillity that roused my impatience. I returned home to pass a cruel night.

On Thursday morning, the 18th of February, I

learned that the Dauphin, who had waited for midnight with impatience, had heard mass immediately after the communion, had passed two hours in devout communication with God, and that his reason then became embarrassed. Madame de Saint-Simon told me afterwards that he had received extreme unction: in fine, that he died at half-past eight. These memoirs are not written to describe my private sentiments. But in reading them,—if, long after me, they shall ever appear,—my state and that of Madame de Saint-Simon will only too keenly be felt. I will content myself with saying, that the first days after the Dauphin's death scarcely appeared to us more than moments; that I wished to quit all, to withdraw from the Court and the world, and that I was only hindered by the wisdom, conduct, and power over me of Madame de Saint-Simon, who yet had much trouble to subdue my sorrowful desires.

Let me say something now of the young prince and his spouse, whom we thus lost in such quick succession.

Never did princess arrive amongst us so young with so much instruction, or with such capacity to profit by instruction. Her skilful father, who thoroughly knew our Court, had painted it to her, and had made her acquainted with the only manner of making herself happy there. From the first moment of her arrival she had acted upon his lessons. Gentle, timid, but adroit, fearing to give the slightest pain to anybody, and though all lightness and vivacity, very capable of far-stretching views; constraint, even to annoyance, cost her nothing, though she felt all its weight. Complacency was natural to her, flowed from her, and was exhibited towards every member of the Court.

Regularly plain, with cheeks hanging, a forehead too prominent, a nose without meaning, thick biting lips,

hair and eye-brows of dark chestnut, and well planted; the most speaking and most beautiful eyes in the world; few teeth, and those all rotten, about which she was the first to talk and jest; the most beautiful complexion and skin; not much bosom, but what there was admirable; the throat long, with the suspicion of a goitre, which did not ill become her; her head carried gallantly, majestically, gracefully; her mien noble; her smile most expressive; her figure long, round, slender, easy, perfectly-shaped; her walk that of a goddess upon the clouds: with such qualifications she pleased supremely. Grace accompanied her every step, and shone through her manners and her most ordinary conversation. An air always simple and natural, often naïve, but seasoned with wit—this with the ease peculiar to her, charmed all who approached her, and communicated itself to them. She wished to please even the most useless and the most ordinary persons, and yet without making an effort to do so. You were tempted to believe her wholly and solely devoted to those with whom she found herself. Her gaiety—young, quick, and active—animated all; and her nymph-like lightness carried her everywhere, like a whirlwind which fills several places at once, and gives them movement and life. She was the ornament of all diversions, the life and soul of all pleasure, and at balls ravished everybody by the justness and perfection of her dancing. She could be amused by playing for small sums but liked high gambling better, and was an excellent, good-tempered, and bold gamester.

She spared nothing, not even her health, to gain Madame de Maintenon, and through her the King. Her suppleness towards them was without example, and never for a moment was at fault. She accompanied it with all the discretion that her knowledge of them, acquired by study and experience, had given her, and

could measure their dispositions to an inch. In this way she had acquired a familiarity with them such as none of the King's children, not even the bastards, had approached.

In public, serious, measured, with the King, and in timid decorum with Madame de Maintenon, whom she never addressed except as *my aunt,* thus prettily confounding friendship and rank. In private, prattling, skipping, flying around them, now perched upon the sides of their arm-chairs, now playing upon their knees, she clasped them round the neck, embraced them, kissed them, caressed them, rumpled them, tickled them under the chin, tormented them, rummaged their tables, their papers, their letters, broke open the seals, and read the contents in spite of opposition, if she saw that her waggeries were likely to be received in good part. When the King was with his ministers, when he received couriers, when the most important affairs were under discussion, she was present, and with such liberty, that, hearing the King and Madame de Maintenon speak one evening with affection of the Court of England, at the time when peace was hoped for from Queen Anne, "My aunt," she said, "you must admit that in England the queens govern better than the kings, and do you know why, my aunt?" asked she, running about and gambolling all the time, "because under kings it is women who govern, and men under queens." The joke is that they both laughed, and said she was right.

The King really could not do without her. Everything went wrong with him if she was not by; even at his public supper, if she were away an additional cloud of seriousness and silence settled around him. She took great care to see him every day upon arriving and departing; and if some ball in winter, or some pleasure party in summer, made her lose half the night, she

nevertheless adjusted things so well that she went and embraced the King the moment he was up, and amused him with a description of the fête.

She was so far removed from the thoughts of death, that on Candlemas-day she talked with Madame de Saint-Simon of people who had died since she had been at Court, and of what she would herself do in old age, of the life she would lead, and of such like matters. Alas! it pleased God, for our misfortune, to dispose of her differently.

With all her coquetry—and she was not wanting in it—never woman seemed to take less heed of her appearance; her toilette was finished in a moment, she cared nothing for finery except at balls and fêtes; if she displayed a little at other times it was simply in order to please the King. If the Court subsisted after her it was only to languish. Never was princess so regretted, never one so worthy of it: regrets have not yet passed away, the involuntary and secret bitterness they caused still remain, with a frightful blank not yet filled up.

Let me now turn to the Dauphin.

The youth of this prince made every one tremble. Stern and choleric to the last degree, and even against inanimate objects; impetuous with frenzy, incapable of suffering the slightest resistance even from the hours and the elements, without flying into a passion that threatened to destroy his body; obstinate to excess; passionately fond of all kind of voluptuousness, of women, with even a worse passion strongly developed at the same time; fond not less of wine, good living, hunting, music, and gaming, in which last he could not endure to be beaten; in fine, abandoned to every passion, and transported by every pleasure; oftentimes wild, naturally disposed towards cruelty; barbarous in raillery, and with an all-powerful capacity for ridicule.

He looked down upon all men as from the sky, as atoms with whom he had nothing in common; even his brothers scarcely appeared connecting links between himself and human nature, although all had been educated together in perfect equality. His sense and penetration shone through everything. His replies, even in anger, astonished everybody. He amused himself with the most abstract knowledge. The extent and vivacity of his intellect were prodigious, and rendered him incapable of applying himself to one study at a time.

So much intelligence and of such a kind, joined to such vivacity, sensibility, and passion, rendered his education difficult. But God, who is the master of all hearts, and whose divine spirit breathes where he wishes, worked a miracle on this prince between his eighteenth and twentieth years. From this abyss he came out affable, gentle, humane, moderate, patient, modest, penitent, and humble; and austere, even more than harmonised with his position. Devoted to his duties, feeling them to be immense, he thought only how to unite the duties of son and subject with those he saw to be destined for himself. The shortness of each day was his only sorrow. All his force, all his consolation, was in prayer and pious reading. He clung with joy to the cross of his Saviour, repenting sincerely of his past pride. The King, with his outside devotion, soon saw with secret displeasure his own life censured by that of a prince so young, who refused himself a new desk in order to give the money it would cost to the poor, and who did not care to accept some new gilding with which it was proposed to furnish his little room.

Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, alarmed at so austere a spouse, left nothing undone in order to soften him. Her charms, with which he was smitten, the

cunning and the unbridled importunities of the young ladies of her suite, disguised in a hundred different forms—the attraction of parties and pleasures to which he was far from insensible,—all were displayed every day. But for a long time he behaved not like a prince but like a novice. On one occasion he refused to be present at a ball on Twelfth Night, and in various ways made himself ridiculous at Court.

In due time, however, he comprehended that the faithful performance of the duties proper to the state in which he had been placed, would be the conduct most agreeable to God. The bark of the tree, little by little, grew softer without affecting the solidity of the trunk. He applied himself to the studies which were necessary, in order to instruct himself in public affairs, and at the same time he lent himself more to the world, doing so with so much grace, with such a natural air, that everybody soon began to grow reconciled to him.

The discernment of this prince was such, that, like the bee, he gathered the most perfect substance from the best and most beautiful flowers. He tried to fathom men, to draw from them the instruction and the light that he could hope for. He conferred sometimes, but rarely, with others besides his chosen few. I was the only one, not of that number, who had complete access to him; with me he opened his heart upon the present and the future with confidence, with sageness, with discretion. A volume would not describe sufficiently my private interviews with this prince,—what love of good! what forgetfulness of self! what researches! what fruit! what purity of purpose!—May I say it? what reflection of the divinity in that mind, candid, simple, strong, which as much as is possible here below had preserved the image of its maker!

If you had business, and thought of opening it to him, say for a quarter of an hour or half an hour, he gave you oftentimes two hours or more, according as he found himself at liberty. Yet he was without verbiage, compliments, prefaces, pleasantries, or other hindrances; went straight to the point, and allowed you to go also.

His undue scruples of devotion diminished every day, as he found himself face to face with the world; above all, he was well cured of the inclination for piety in preference to talent, that is to say, for making a man ambassador, minister, or general, rather on account of his devotedness than of his capacity or experience. He saw the danger of inducing hypocrisy by placing devotion too high as a qualification for employ.

It was he who was not afraid to say publicly, in the Salon of Marly, that "a king is made for his subjects, and not the subjects for him;" a remark that, except under his own reign, which God did not permit, would have been the most frightful blasphemy.

Great God! what a spectacle you gave to us in him. What tender but tranquil views he had! What submission and love of God! What a consciousness of his own nothingness, and of his sins! What a magnificent idea of the infinite mercy! What religious and humble fear! What tempered confidence! What patience! What constant goodness for all who approached him! France fell, in fine, under this last chastisement. God showed to her a prince she merited not. The earth was not worthy of him; he was ripe already for the blessed eternity!

CHAPTER LX

THE consternation at the event that had taken place was real and general; it penetrated to foreign lands and courts. Whilst the people wept for him who thought only of their relief, and all France lamented a prince who only wished to reign in order to render it flourishing and happy, the sovereigns of Europe publicly lamented him whom they regarded as their example, and whose virtues were preparing him to be their arbitrator, and the peaceful and revered moderator of nations. The Pope was so touched that he resolved of himself to set aside all rule and hold expressly a consistory; deplored there the infinite loss the church and all Christianity had sustained, and pronounced a complete eulogium of the prince who caused the just regrets of all Europe.

On Saturday, the 13th, the corpse of the Dauphine was left in its bed with uncovered face, and opened the same evening at eleven in presence of all the faculty. On the 15th it was placed in the grand cabinet, where masses were continually said.

On Friday, the 19th, the corpse of Monseigneur le Dauphin was opened, a little more than twenty-four hours after his death, also in presence of all the faculty. His heart was immediately carried to Versailles, and placed by the side of that of Madame la Dauphine. Both were afterwards taken to the Val de Grâce. They arrived at midnight with a numerous cortège. All was finished in two hours. The corpse of Monseigneur le Dauphin was afterwards carried from Marly to Ver-

sailles, and placed by the side of Madame la Dauphine on the same estrade.

On Tuesday, the 23rd February, the two bodies were taken from Versailles to Saint-Denis in the same chariot. The procession began to enter Paris by the Porte Saint-Honoré at two o'clock in the morning, and arrived between seven and eight o'clock in the morning at Saint-Denis. There was great order in Paris, and no confusion.

On Tuesday, the 8th March, Monseigneur le Duc de Bretagne, eldest son of Monsieur le Dauphin, who had succeeded to the name and rank of his father, being then only five years and some months old, and who had been seized with measles within a few days, expired, in spite of all the remedies given him. His brother, M. le Duc d'Anjou, who still sucked, was taken ill at the same time, but thanks to the care of the Duchesse de Ventadour, whom in after life he never forgot, and who administered an antidote, escaped, and is now King.

Thus three Dauphins died in less than a year, and father, mother, and eldest son in twenty-four days! On Wednesday, the 9th of March, the corpse of the little Dauphin was opened at night, and without any ceremony his heart was taken to the Val de Grâce, his body to Saint-Denis, and placed by the side of those of his father and mother. M. le Duc d'Anjou, now sole remaining child, succeeded to the title and to the rank of Dauphin.

I have said that the bodies of the Dauphin and the Dauphine were opened in presence of all the faculty. The report made upon the opening of the latter was not consolatory. Only one of the doctors declared there were no signs of poison; the rest were of the opposite opinion. When the body of the Dauphin was opened, everybody was terrified. His viscera were

all dissolved; his heart had no consistency; its substance flowed through the hands of those who tried to hold it; an intolerable odour, too, filled the apartment. The majority of the doctors declared they saw in all this the effect of a very subtle and very violent poison, which had consumed all the interior of the body, like a burning fire. As before, there was one of their number who held different views, but this was Maréchal, who declared that to persuade the King of the existence of secret enemies of his family would be to kill him by degrees.

This medical opinion that the cause of the Dauphin's and the Dauphine's death was poison, soon spread like wildfire over the Court and the city. Public indignation fell upon M. d'Orléans, who was at once pointed out as the poisoner. The rapidity with which this rumour filled the Court, Paris, the provinces, the least frequented places, the most isolated monasteries, the most deserted solitudes, all foreign countries and all the peoples of Europe, recalled to me the efforts of the cabal, which had previously spread such black reports against the honour of him whom all the world now wept, and showed that the cabal, though dispersed, was not dissolved.

In effect M. du Maine, now the head of the cabal, who had all to gain and nothing to lose by the death of the Dauphin and Dauphine, from both of whom he had studiously held aloof, and who thoroughly disliked M. d'Orléans, did all in his power to circulate this odious report. He communicated it to Madame de Maintenon, by whom it reached the King. In a short time all the Court, down to the meanest valets, publicly cried vengeance upon M. d'Orléans, with an air of the most unbridled indignation and of perfect security.

M. d'Orléans, with respect to the two losses that

afflicted the public, had an interest the most directly opposite to that of M. du Maine; he had everything to gain by the life of the Dauphin and Dauphine, and unless he had been a monster vomited forth from hell he could not have been guilty of the crime with which he was charged. Nevertheless, the odious accusation flew from mouth to mouth, and took refuge in every breast.

Let us compare the interest M. d'Orléans had in the life of the Dauphin with the interest M. du Maine had in his death, and then look about for the poisoner. But this is not all. Let us remember how M. le Duc d'Orléans was treated by Monseigneur, and yet what genuine grief he displayed at the death of that prince. What a contrast was this conduct with that of M. du Maine at another time, who, after leaving the King (Louis XIV.) at the point of death, delivered over to an ignorant peasant, imitated that peasant so naturally and so pleasantly, that bursts of laughter extended to the gallery, and scandalized the passers-by. This is a celebrated and very characteristic fact, which will find its proper place if I live long enough to carry these memoirs up to the death of the King.

M. d'Orléans was, however, already in such bad odour, that people were ready to believe anything to his discredit. They drank in this new report so rapidly, that on the 17th of February, as he went with Madame to give the holy water to the corpse of the Dauphine, the crowd of the people threw out all sorts of accusations against him, which both he and Madame very distinctly heard, without daring to show it, and were in trouble, embarrassment, and indignation, as may be imagined. There was even ground for fearing worse from an excited and credulous populace when M. d'Orléans went alone to give the holy water to the corpse of the Dauphin. For he had to endure

on his passage atrocious insults from a populace which uttered aloud the most frightful observations, which pointed the finger at him with the coarsest epithets, and which believed it was doing him a favour in not falling upon him and tearing him to pieces!

Similar circumstances took place at the funeral procession. The streets resounded more with cries of indignation against M. d'Orléans and abuse of him than with grief. Silent precautions were not forgotten in Paris in order to check the public fury, the boiling over of which was feared at different moments. The people recompensed themselves by gestures, cries, and other atrocities, vomited against M. d'Orléans. Near the Palais Royal, before which the procession passed, the increase of shouts, of cries, of abuse, was so great, that for some minutes everything was to be feared.

It may be imagined what use M. du Maine contrived to make of the public folly, the rumours of the Paris *cafés*, the feeling of the *salon* of Marly, that of the Parliament, the reports that arrived from the provinces and foreign countries. In a short time so overpowered was M. d'Orléans by the feeling against him everywhere exhibited, that acting upon very ill-judged advice he spoke to the King upon the subject, and begged to be allowed to surrender himself as a prisoner at the Bastille, until his character was cleared from stain.

I was terribly annoyed when I heard that M. d'Orléans had taken this step, which could not possibly lead to good. I had quite another sort of scheme in my head which I should have proposed to him had I known of his resolve. Fortunately, however, the King was persuaded not to grant M. d'Orléans' request, out of which therefore nothing came. The Duke meanwhile lived more abandoned by everybody than ever; if in the *salon* he approached a group of courtiers,

each, without the least hesitation, turned to the right or to the left and went elsewhere, so that it was impossible for him to accost anybody except by surprise, and if he did so, he was left alone directly after with the most marked indecency. In a word, I was the only person, I say distinctly, the only person, who spoke to M. d'Orléans as before. Whether in his own house or in the palace I conversed with him, seated myself by his side in a corner of the *salon*, where assuredly we had no third person to fear, and walked with him in the gardens under the very windows of the King and of Madame de Maintenon.

Nevertheless, all my friends warned me that if I pursued this conduct so opposite to that in vogue, I should assuredly fall into disgrace. I held firm. I thought that when we did not believe our friends guilty we ought not to desert them, but, on the contrary, to draw closer to them, as by honour bound, give them the consolation due from us, and show thus to the world our hatred for calumny. My friends insisted; gave me to understand that the King disapproved my conduct, that Madame de Maintenon was annoyed at it: they forgot nothing to awaken my fears. But I was insensible to all they said to me, and did not omit seeing M. d'Orléans a single day; often stopping with him two and three hours at a time.

A few weeks had passed over thus, when one morning M. de Beauvilliers called upon me, and urged me to plead business, and at once withdraw to La Ferté; intimating that if I did not do so of my own accord, I should be compelled by an order from the King. He never explained himself more fully, but I have always remained persuaded that the King or Madame de Maintenon had sent him to me, and had told him that I should be banished if I did not banish myself. Neither my absence nor my departure made any stir;

nobody suspected anything. I was carefully informed, without knowing by whom, when my exile was likely to end: and I returned, after a month or five weeks, straight to the Court, where I kept up the same intimacy with M. d'Orléans as before.

But he was not yet at the end of his misfortunes. The Princesse des Ursins had not forgiven him his pleasantry at her expense. Chalais, one of her most useful agents, was despatched by her on a journey so mysterious that its obscurity has never been illuminated. He was eighteen days on the road, unknown, concealing his name, and passing within two leagues of Chalais, where his father and mother lived, without giving them any signs of life, although all were on very good terms. He loitered secretly in Poitou, and at last arrested there a Cordelier monk, of middle age, in the convent of Bressuire, who cried, "Ah! I am lost!" upon being caught. Chalais conducted him to the prison of Poitiers, whence he despatched to Madrid an officer of dragoons he had brought with him, and who knew this Cordelier, whose name has never transpired, although it is certain he was really a Cordelier, and that he was returning from a journey in Italy and Germany that had extended as far as Vienna. Chalais pushed on to Paris, and came to Marly on the 27th of April, a day on which the King had taken medicine. After dinner he was taken by Torcy to the King, with whom he remained half an hour, delaying thus the Council of State for the same time, and then returned immediately to Paris. So much trouble had not been taken for no purpose: and Chalais had not prostituted himself to play the part of *prévôt* to a miserable monk without expecting good winnings from the game. Immediately afterwards the most dreadful rumours were everywhere in circulation against M. d'Orléans, who, it was said, had poisoned the Dauphin

and Dauphine by means of this monk, who, nevertheless, was far enough away from our Prince and Princess at the time of their death. In an instant Paris resounded with these horrors; the provinces were inundated with them, and immediately afterwards foreign countries—this too with an incredible rapidity, which plainly showed how well the plot had been prepared—and a publicity that reached the very caverns of the earth. Madame des Ursins was not less served in Spain than M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon in France. The anger of the public was doubled. The Cordelier was brought, bound hand and foot, to the Bastille, and delivered up to D'Argenson, Lieutenant of Police.

This D'Argenson rendered an account to the King of many things which Pontchartrain, as Secretary of State, considered to belong to his department. Pontchartrain was vexed beyond measure at this, and could not see without despair his subaltern become a kind of minister more feared, more valued, more in consideration than he, and conduct himself always in such manner that he gained many powerful friends, and made but few enemies, and those of but little moment. M. d'Orléans bowed before the storm that he could not avert; it could not increase the general desertion; he had accustomed himself to his solitude, and, as he had never heard this monk spoken of, had not the slightest fear on his account. D'Argenson, who questioned the Cordelier several times, and carried his replies daily to the King, was sufficiently adroit to pay his court to M. d'Orléans, by telling him that the prisoner had uttered nothing which concerned him, and by representing the services he did M. d'Orléans with the King. Like a sagacious man, D'Argenson saw the madness of popular anger devoid of all foundation, and which could not hinder M. d'Orléans from being a

very considerable person in France, during a minority that the age of the King showed to be pretty near. He took care, therefore, to avail himself of the mystery which surrounded his office, to ingratiate himself more and more with M. d'Orléans, whom he had always carefully though secretly served; and his conduct, as will be seen in due time, procured him a large fortune.

But I have gone too far. I must retrace my steps, to speak of things I have omitted to notice in their proper place.

The two Dauphins and the Dauphine were interred at Saint-Denis, on Monday, the 18th of April. The funeral oration was pronounced by Maboul, Bishop of Aleth, and pleased; M. de Metz, chief chaplain, officiated; the service commenced at about eleven o'clock. As it was very long, it was thought well to have at hand a large vase of vinegar, in case anybody should be ill. M. de Metz having taken the first oblation, and observing that very little wine was left for the second, asked for more. This large vase of vinegar was supposed to be wine, and M. de Metz, who wished to strengthen himself, said, washing his fingers over the chalice, "fill right up." He swallowed all at a draught, and did not perceive until the end that he had drunk vinegar; his grimace and his complaint caused some little laughter round him; and he often related this adventure, which much soured him. On Monday, the 10th of May, the funeral service for the Dauphin and Dauphine was performed at Notre Dame.

Let me here say, that before the Prince and his spouse were buried, that is to say, the 6th of April, the King gave orders for the recommencement of the usual play at Marly; and that M. le Duc de Berry and Madame la Duchesse de Berry presided in the *salon* at the public lansquenet and brelan, and the different gaming tables for all the Court. In a short time

the King dined in Madame de Maintenon's apartments once or twice a week, and had music there. And all this, as I have remarked, with the corpse of the Dauphin and that of the Dauphine still above ground.

The gap left by the death of the Dauphine could not, however, be easily filled up. Some months after her loss, the King began to feel great ennui steal upon him in the hours when he had no work with his ministers. The few ladies admitted into the apartments of Madame de Maintenon when he was there, were unable to entertain him. Music, frequently introduced, languished from that cause. Detached scenes from the comedies of Molière were thought of, and were played by the King's musicians, comedians for the nonce. Madame de Maintenon introduced, too, the Maréchal de Villeroy, to amuse the King by relating their youthful adventures.

Evening amusements became more and more frequent in Madame de Maintenon's apartments, where, however, nothing could fill up the void left by the poor Dauphine.

I have said little of the grief I felt at the loss of the prince whom everybody so deeply regretted. As will be believed, it was bitter and profound. The day of his death, I barricaded myself in my own house, and only left it for one instant in order to join the King at his promenade in the gardens. The vexation I felt upon seeing him followed almost as usual, did not permit me to stop more than an instant. All the rest of the stay at Versailles, I scarcely left my room, except to visit M. de Beauvilliers. I will admit that, to reach M. de Beauvilliers' house, I made a circuit between the canal and the gardens of Versailles, so as to spare myself the sight of the chamber of death, which I had not force enough to approach. I admit that I was weak. I was sustained neither by the piety,

superior to all things, of M. de Beauvilliers, nor by that of Madame de Saint-Simon, who nevertheless not the less suffered. The truth is, I was in despair. To those who know my position, this will appear less strange than my being able to support at all so complete a misfortune. I experienced this sadness precisely at the same age as that of my father when he lost Louis XIII.; but he at least had enjoyed the results of favour, whilst I, *Gustavi paululum mellis, et ecce morior.* Yet this was not all.

In the casket of the Dauphin there were several papers he had asked me for. I had drawn them up in all confidence; he had preserved them in the same manner. There was one, very large, in my hand, which if seen by the King, would have robbed me of his favour for ever; ruined me without hope of return. We do not think in time of such catastrophes. The King knew my handwriting; he did not know my mode of thought, but might pretty well have guessed it. I had sometimes supplied him with means to do so; my good friends of the Court had done the rest. The King when he discovered my paper would also discover on what close terms of intimacy I had been with the Dauphin, of which he had no suspicion. My anguish was then cruel, and there seemed every reason to believe that if my secret was found out, I should be disgraced and exiled during all the rest of the King's reign.

What a contrast between the bright heaven I had so recently gazed upon and the abyss now yawning at my feet! But so it is in the Court and the world! I felt then the nothingness of even the most desirable future, by an inward sentiment, which, nevertheless, indicates how we cling to it. Fear on account of the contents of the casket had scarcely any power over me. I was obliged to reflect in order to return to it from time to

time. Regret for this incomparable Dauphin pierced my heart, and suspended all the faculties of my soul. For a long time I wished to fly from the Court, so that I might never again see the deceitful face of the world; and it was some time before prudence and honour got the upper hand.

It so happened that the Duc de Beauvilliers himself was able to carry this casket to the King, who had the key of it. M. de Beauvilliers in fact resolved not to trust it out of his own hands, but to wait until he was well enough to take it to the King, so that he might then try to hide my papers from view. This task was difficult, for he did not know the position in the casket of these dangerous documents, and yet it was our only resource. This terrible uncertainty lasted more than a fortnight.

On Tuesday, the 1st of March, M. de Beauvilliers carried the casket to the King. He came to me shortly after, and before sitting down, indicated by signs that there was no further occasion for fear. He then related to me that he had found the casket full of a mass of documents, finance projects, reports from the provinces, papers of all kinds, that he had read some of them to the King on purpose to weary him, and had succeeded so well that the King soon was satisfied by hearing only the titles; and, at last, tired out by not finding anything important, said it was not worth while to read more, and that there was nothing to do but to throw everything into the fire. The Duke assured me that he did not wait to be told twice, being all the more anxious to comply, because at the bottom of the casket he had seen some of my handwriting, which he had promptly covered up in taking other papers to read their titles to the King; and that immediately the word "fire" was uttered, he confusedly threw all the papers into the casket, and then emptied it near the fire, be-

tween the King and Madame de Maintenon, taking good care as he did so that my documents should not be seen,—even cautiously using the tongs in order to prevent any piece flying away, and not quitting the fireplace until he had seen every page consumed. We embraced each other, in the relief we reciprocally felt, relief proportioned to the danger we had run.

CHAPTER LXI

LET me here relate an incident which should have found a place earlier, but which has been omitted in order that what has gone before might be uninterrupted. On the 16th of the previous July the King made a journey to Fontainebleau, where he remained until the 14th of September. I should suppress the bagatelle which happened on the occasion of this journey, if it did not serve more and more to characterize the King.

Madame la Duchesse de Berry was in the family way for the first time, had been so for nearly three months, was much inconvenienced, and had a pretty strong fever. M. Fagon, the doctor, thought it would be imprudent for her not to put off travelling for a day or two. Neither she nor M. d'Orléans dared to speak about it. M. le Duc de Berry timidly hazarded a word, and was ill received. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans more timid still, addressed herself to Madame, and to Madame de Maintenon, who, indifferent as they might be respecting Madame la Duchesse de Berry, thought her departure so hazardous that, supported by Fagon, they spoke of it to the King. It was useless. They were not daunted, however, and this dispute lasted three or four days. The end of it was, that the King grew thoroughly angry and agreed, by way of capitulation, that the journey should be performed in a boat instead of a coach.

It was arranged that Madame la Duchesse de Berry should leave Marly, where the King then was, on the 13th, sleep at the Palais Royal that night and repose

herself there all the next day and night, that on the 15th she should set out for Petit-Bourg, where the King was to halt for the night, and arrive like him, on the 16th, at Fontainebleau, the whole journey to be by the river. M. le Duc de Berry had permission to accompany his wife; but during the two nights they were to rest in Paris the King angrily forbade them to go anywhere, even to the Opera, although that building joined the Palais Royal, and M. d'Orléans' box could be reached without going out of the palace.

On the 14th the King, under pretence of inquiry after them, repeated this prohibition to M. le Duc de Berry and Madame his wife, and also to M. d'Orléans and Madame d'Orléans, who had been included in it. He carried his caution so far as to enjoin Madame de Saint-Simon to see that Madame la Duchesse de Berry obeyed the instructions she had received. As may be believed, his orders were punctually obeyed. Madame de Saint-Simon could not refuse to remain and sleep in the Palais Royal, where the apartment of the queen-mother was given to her. All the while the party was shut up there was a good deal of gaming in order to console M. le Duc de Berry for his confinement.

The provost of the merchants had orders to prepare boats for the trip to Fontainebleau. He had so little time that they were ill chosen. Madame la Duchesse de Berry embarked, however, on the 15th, and arrived, with fever, at ten o'clock at night at Petit-Bourg, where the King appeared rejoiced by an obedience so exact.

On the morrow the journey recommenced. In passing Melun, the boat of Madame la Duchesse de Berry struck against the bridge, was nearly capsized, and almost swamped, so that they were all in great danger. They got off, however, with fear and a delay. Disem-

barking in great disorder at Valvin, where their equipages were waiting for them, they arrived at Fontainebleau two hours after midnight. The King, pleased beyond measure, went the next morning to see Madame la Duchesse de Berry in the beautiful apartment of the queen-mother that had been given to her. From the moment of her arrival she had been forced to keep her bed, and at six o'clock in the morning of the 21st of July she miscarried and was delivered of a daughter, still-born. Madame de Saint-Simon ran to tell the King; he did not appear much moved; he had been obeyed! The Duchesse de Beauvilliers and the Marquise de Chatillon were named by the King to carry the embryo to Saint-Denis. As it was only a girl, and as the miscarriage had no ill effect, consolation soon came.

It was some little time after this occurrence, that we heard of the defeat of the Czar by the Grand Vizier upon the Pruth. The Czar, annoyed by the protection the Porte had accorded to the King of Sweden (in retirement at Bender), made an appeal to arms, and fell into the same error as that which had occasioned the defeat of the King of Sweden by him. The Turks drew him to the Pruth across deserts supplied with nothing; if he did not risk all, by a very unequal battle, he must perish. The Czar was at the head of sixty thousand men: he lost more than thirty thousand on the Pruth, the rest were dying of hunger and misery; and he, without any resources, could scarcely avoid surrendering himself and his forces to the Turks. In this pressing extremity, a common woman whom he had taken away from her husband, a drummer in the army, and whom he had publicly espoused after having repudiated and confined his own wife in a convent,—proposed that he should try by bribery to induce the Grand Vizier to allow him and the wreck

of his forces to retreat. The Czar approved of the proposition, without hoping for success from it. He sent to the Grand Vizier and ordered him to be spoken to in secret. The Vizier was dazzled by the gold, the precious stones, and several valuable things that were offered to him. He accepted and received them; and signed a treaty by which the Czar was permitted to retire, with all who accompanied him, into his own states by the shortest road, the Turks to furnish him with provisions, with which he was entirely unprovided. The Czar, on his side, agreed to give up Azof as soon as he returned; destroy all the forts and burn all the vessels that he had upon the Black Sea; allow the King of Sweden to return by Pomerania; and to pay the Turks and their Prince all the expenses of the war.

The Grand Vizier found such an opposition in the Divan to this treaty, and such boldness in the minister of the King of Sweden, who accompanied him, in exciting against him all the chiefs of the army, that it was within an ace of being broken; and the Czar, with every one left to him, of being made prisoner. The latter was in no condition to make even the least resistance. The Grand Vizier had only to will it, in order to execute it on the spot. In addition to the glory of leading captive to Constantinople the Czar, his Court, and his troops, there would have been his ransom, which must have cost not a little. But if he had been thus stripped of his riches, they would have been for the Sultan, and the Grand Vizier preferred having them for himself. He braved it then with authority and menaces, and hastened the Czar's departure and his own. The Swedish minister, charged with protests from the principal Turkish chiefs, hurried to Constantinople, where the Grand Vizier was strangled upon arriving.

The Czar never forgot this service of his wife, by whose courage and presence of mind he had been saved. The esteem he conceived for her, joined to his friendship, induced him to crown her Czarina, and to consult her upon all his affairs and all his schemes. Escaped from danger, he was a long time without giving up Azof, or demolishing his forts on the Black Sea. As for his vessels, he kept them nearly all, and would not allow the King of Sweden to return into Germany, as he had agreed, thus almost lighting up a fresh war with the Turk.

On the 6th of November, 1711, at about eight o'clock in the evening, the shock of an earthquake was felt in Paris and at Versailles; but it was so slight that few people perceived it. In several places towards Touraine and Poitou, in Saxony, and in some of the German towns near, it was very perceptible at the same day and hour. At this date a new tontine was established in Paris.

I have so often spoken of Marshal Catinat, of his virtue, wisdom, modesty, and disinterestedness; of the rare superiority of his sentiments, and of his great qualities as captain, that nothing remains for me to say except that he died at this time very advanced in years, at his little house of Saint-Gratien, near Saint-Denis, where he had retired, and which he seldom quitted, although receiving there but few friends. By his simplicity and frugality, his contempt for worldly distinction, and his uniformity of conduct, he recalled the memory of those great men who, after the best-merited triumphs, peacefully returned to the plough, still loving their country and but little offended by the ingratitude of the Rome they had so well served. Catinat placed his philosophy at the service of his piety. He had intelligence, good sense, ripe reflection; and he never forgot his origin; his dress, his equipages, his

furniture, all were of the greatest simplicity. His air and his deportment were so also. He was tall, dark, and thin; had an aspect pensive, slow, and somewhat mean; with very fine and expressive eyes. He deplored the signal faults that he saw succeed each other unceasingly; the gradual extinction of all emulation; the luxury, the emptiness, the ignorance, the confusion of ranks; the inquisition in the place of the police: he saw all the signs of destruction, and he used to say it was only a climax of dangerous disorder that could restore order to the realm.

Vendôme was one of the few to whom the death of the Dauphin and the Dauphine brought hope and joy. He had deemed himself expatriated for the rest of his life. He saw, now, good chances before him of returning to our Court, and of playing a part there again. He had obtained some honour in Spain; he aimed at others even higher, and hoped to return to France with all the honours of a Prince of the Blood. His idleness, his free living, his debauchery, had prolonged his stay upon the frontier, where he had more facilities for gratifying his tastes than at Madrid. In that city, it is true, he did not much constrain himself, but he was forced to do so to some extent by courtly usages. He was, then, quite at home on the frontier; there was nothing to do; for the Austrians, weakened by the departure of the English, were quite unable to attack; and Vendôme, floating upon the delights of his new dignities, thought only of enjoying himself in the midst of profound idleness, under pretext that operations could not at once be commenced.

In order to be more at liberty he separated from the general officers, and established himself with his valets and two or three of his most familiar friends, cherished companions everywhere, at Vignarez, a little isolated hamlet, almost deserted, on the sea-shore and in

the kingdom of Valencia. His object was to eat fish there to his heart's content. He carried out that object, and filled himself to repletion for nearly a month. He became unwell—his diet, as may be believed, was enough to cause this—but his illness increased so rapidly, and in so strange a manner, after having for a long time seemed nothing—that the few around him suspected poison, and sent on all sides for assistance. But the malady would not wait; it augmented rapidly with strange symptoms. Vendôme could not sign a will that was presented to him; nor a letter to the King, in which he asked that his brother might be permitted to return to Court. Everybody near flew from him and abandoned him, so that he remained in the hands of three or four of the meanest valets, whilst the rest robbed him of everything and decamped. He passed thus the last two or three days of his life, without a priest,—no mention even had been made of one,—without other help than that of a single surgeon. The three or four valets who remained near him, seeing him at his last extremity, seized hold of the few things he still possessed, and for want of better plunder, dragged off his bed-clothes and the mattress from under him. He piteously cried to them at least not to leave him to die naked upon the bare bed. I know not whether they listened to him.

Thus died on Friday, the 10th of June, 1712, the haughtiest of men; and the happiest, except in the latter years of his life. After having been obliged to speak of him so often, I get rid of him now, once, and for ever. He was fifty-eight years old; but in spite of the blind and prodigious favour he had enjoyed, that favour had never been able to make aught but a cabal hero out of a captain who was a very bad general, and a man whose vices were the shame of

humanity. His death restored life and joy to all Spain.

Aguilar, a friend of the Duc de Noailles, was accused of having poisoned him; but took little pains to defend himself, inasmuch as little pains were taken to substantiate the accusation. The Princesse des Ursins, who had so well profited by his life in order to increase her own greatness, did not profit less by his death. She felt her deliverance from a new Don Juan of Spain who had ceased to be supple in her hands, and who might have revived, in the course of time, all the power and authority he had formerly enjoyed in France. She was not shocked then by the joy which burst out without constraint; nor by the free talk of the Court, the city, the army, of all Spain. But in order to sustain what she had done, and cheaply pay her court to M. du Maine, Madame de Maintenon, and even to the King, she ordered that the corpse of this hideous monster of greatness and of fortune should be carried to the Escurial. This was crowning the glory of M. de Vendôme in good earnest; for no private persons are buried in the Escurial, although several are to be found in Saint-Denis. But meanwhile, until I speak of the visit I made to the Escurial—I shall do so if I live long enough to carry these memoirs up to the death of M. d'Orléans,—let me say something of that illustrious sepulchre.

The Pantheon is the place where only the bodies of kings and queens who have had posterity are admitted. In a separate place, near, though not on the same floor, and resembling a library, the bodies of children, and of queens who have had no posterity, are ranged. A third place, a sort of antechamber to the last named, is rightly called "the rotting room;" whilst the other improperly bears the same name. In this third room, there is nothing to be seen but four

bare walls and a table in the middle. The walls being very thick, openings are made in them in which the bodies are placed. Each body has an opening to itself, which is afterwards walled up, so that nothing is seen. When it is thought that the corpse has been closed up sufficiently long to be free from odour the wall is opened, the body taken out, and put in a coffin which allows a portion of it to be seen towards the feet. This coffin is covered with a rich stuff and carried into an adjoining room.

The body of the Duc de Vendôme had been walled up nine years when I entered the Escurial. I was shown the place it occupied, smooth like every part of the four walls and without mark. I gently asked the monks who did me the honours of the place, when the body would be removed to the other chamber. They would not satisfy my curiosity, showed some indignation, and plainly intimated that this removal was not dreamt of, and that as M. de Vendôme had been so carefully walled up he might remain so!

Harlay, formerly chief-president, of whom I have so often had occasion to speak, died a short time after M. de Vendôme. I have already made him known. I will simply add an account of the humiliation to which this haughty cynic was reduced. He hired a house in the Rue de l'Université with a partition wall between his garden and that of the Jacobins of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. The house did not belong to the Jacobins, like the houses of the Rue Saint-Dominique, and the Rue du Bac, which, in order that they might command higher rents, were put in connection with the convent garden. These mendicant Jacobins thus derive fifty thousand livres a-year. Harlay, accustomed to exercise authority, asked them for a door into their garden. He was refused. He insisted, had them spoken to, and succeeded no better. Nevertheless the

Jacobins comprehended that although this magistrate, recently so powerful, was now nothing by himself, he had a son and a cousin, Councillors of State, whom they might some day have to do with, and who for pride's sake might make themselves very disagreeable. The argument of interest is the best of all with monks. The Jacobins changed their mind. The Prior, accompanied by some of the notabilities of the convent, went to Harlay with excuses, and said he was at liberty, if he liked, to make the door. Harlay, true to his character, looked at them askance, and replied, that he had changed his mind and would do without it. The monks, much troubled by his refusal, insisted; he interrupted them and said, "Look you, my fathers, I am grandson of Achille du Harlay, Chief-President of the Parliament, who so well served the State and the Kingdom, and who for his support of the public cause was dragged to the Bastille, where he expected to be hanged by those rascally Leaguers; it would ill become me, therefore, to enter the house, or pray to God there, of folks of the same stamp as that Jacques Clement." And he immediately turned his back upon them, leaving them confounded. This was his last act of vigour. He took it into his head afterwards to go out visiting a good deal, and as he preserved all his old unpleasant manners, he afflicted all he visited; he went even to persons who had often cooled their heels in his antechambers. By degrees, slight but frequent attacks of apoplexy troubled his speech, so that people had great difficulty in understanding him, and he in speaking. In this state he did not cease his visits and could not perceive that many doors were closed to him. He died in this misery, and this neglect, to the great relief of the few who by relationship were obliged to see him, above all of his son and his domestic.

On the 17th July, a truce between France and Eng-

land was published in Flanders, at the head of the troops of the two crowns. The Emperor, however, was not yet inclined for peace and his forces under Prince Eugène continued to oppose us in Flanders, where, however, the tide at last turned in our favour. The King was so flattered by the overflow of joy that took place at Fontainebleau on account of our successes, that he thanked the country for it, for the first time in his life. Prince Eugène, in want of bread and of everything, raised the siege of Landrecies, which he had been conducting, and terrible desertion took place among his troops.

About this time, there was an irruption of wolves, which caused great disorders in the Orléannais; the King's wolf-hunters were sent there, and the people were authorised to take arms and make a number of grand battues.

CHAPTER LXII

PEACE was now all but concluded between France and England. There was, however, one great obstacle still in its way. Queen Anne and her Council were stopped by the consideration that the King of Spain would claim to succeed to the Crown of France, if the little Dauphin should die. Neither England nor any of the other powers at war would consent to see the two principal crowns of Europe upon the same head. It was necessary, then, above all things to get rid of this difficulty, and so arrange the order of succession to our throne, that the case to be provided against could never happen. Treaties, renunciations, and oaths, all of which the King had already broken, appeared feeble guarantees in the eyes of Europe. Something stronger was sought for. It could not be found; because there is nothing more sacred among men than engagements which they consider binding on each other. What was wanting then in mere forms it was now thought could be supplied by giving to those forms the greatest possible solemnity.

It was a long time before we could get over the difficulty. The King would accord nothing except promises in order to guarantee to Europe that the two crowns should never be united upon the same head. His authority was wounded at the idea of being called upon to admit, as it were, a rival near it. Absolute without reply, as he had become, he had extinguished and absorbed even the minutest trace, idea, and recollection of all other authority, all other power in France

except that which emanated from himself alone. The English, little accustomed to such maxims, proposed that the States-General should assemble in order to give weight to the renunciations to be made. They said, and with reason, that it was not enough that the King of Spain should renounce France unless France renounced Spain; and that this formality was necessary in order to break the double bonds which attached Spain to France, as France was attached to Spain. Accustomed to their parliaments, which are in effect their States-General, they believed ours preserved the same authority, and they thought such authority the greatest to be obtained and the best capable of solidly supporting that of the King.

The effect of this upon the mind of a Prince almost deified in his own eyes, and habituated to the most unlimited despotism, cannot be expressed. To show him that the authority of his subjects was thought necessary in order to confirm his own, wounded him in his most delicate part. The English were made to understand the weakness and the uselessness of what they asked; for the powerlessness of our States-General was explained to them, and they saw at once how vain their help would be, even if accorded.

For a long time nothing was done; France saying that a treaty of renunciation and an express confirmatory declaration of the King, registered in the Parliament, were sufficient; the English replying by reference to the fate of past treaties. Peace meanwhile was arranged with the English, and much beyond our hopes remained undisturbed.

In due time matters were so far advanced in spite of obstacles thrown in the way by the allies, that the Duc d'Aumont was sent as ambassador into England; and the Duke of Hamilton was named as ambassador for France. This last, however, losing his life in a

duel with Lord Mohun, the Duke of Shrewsbury was appointed in his stead.

At the commencement of the new year [1713] the Duke and Duchess of Shrewsbury arrived in Paris. The Duchess was a great fat masculine creature, more than past the meridian, who had been beautiful and who affected to be so still; bare bosomed; her hair behind her ears; covered with rouge and patches, and full of finicking ways. All her manners were that of a mad thing, but her play, her taste, her magnificence, even her general familiarity, made her the fashion. She soon declared the women's head-dresses ridiculous, as indeed they were. They were edifices of brass wire, ribbons, hair, and all sorts of tawdry rubbish more than two feet high, making women's faces seem in the middle of their bodies. The old ladies wore the same, but made of black gauze. If they moved ever so lightly the edifice trembled and the inconvenience was extreme. The King could not endure them, but master as he was of everything was unable to banish them. They lasted for ten years and more, despite all he could say and do. What this monarch had been unable to perform, the taste and example of a silly foreigner accomplished with the most surprising rapidity. From extreme height, the ladies descended to extreme lowness, and these head-dresses, more simple, more convenient, and more becoming, last even now. Reasonable people wait with impatience for some other mad stranger who will strip our dames of these immense baskets, thoroughly insupportable to themselves and to others.

Shortly after the Duke of Shrewsbury arrived in Paris, the Hôtel de Powis in London, occupied by our ambassador the Duc d'Aumont, was burnt to the ground. A neighbouring house was pulled down to prevent others catching fire. The plate of M. d'Au-

mont was saved. He pretended to have lost everything else. He pretended also to have received several warnings that his house was to be burnt and himself assassinated, and that the Queen, to whom he had mentioned these warnings, offered to give him a guard. People judged otherwise in London and Paris, and felt persuaded he himself had been the incendiary in order to draw money from the King and also to conceal some monstrous smuggling operations, by which he gained enormously, and which the English had complained of ever since his arrival. This is at least what was publicly said in the two courts and cities, and nearly everybody believed it.

But to return to the peace. The renunciations were ready, towards the middle of March, and were agreed upon. The King was invited to sign them by his own most pressing interest; and the Court of England, to which we owed all, was not less interested in consummating this grand work, so as to enjoy, with the glory of having imposed it upon all the powers, that domestic repose which was unceasingly disturbed by the party opposed to the government, which party, excited by the enemies of peace abroad, could not cease to cause disquiet to the Queen's minister, while, by delay in signing, vain hopes of disturbing the peace or hindering its ratification existed in people's minds. The King of Spain had made his renunciations with all the solidity and solemnity which could be desired from the laws, customs, and usages of Spain. It only remained for France to imitate him.

For the ceremony that was to take place, all that could be obtained in order to render it more solemn was the presence of the peers. But the King was so jealous of his authority, and so little inclined to pay attention to that of others, that he wished to content himself with merely saying in a general way that he

hoped to find all the peers at the Parliament when the renunciations were made. I told M. d'Orléans that if the King thought such an announcement as this was enough he might rely upon finding not a single peer at the Parliament. I added, that if the King did not himself invite each peer, the master of the ceremonies ought to do so for him, according to the custom always followed. This warning had its effect. We all received written invitations, immediately. Wednesday, the 18th of May, was fixed for the ceremony.

At six o'clock on the morning of that day I went to the apartments of M. le Duc de Berry, in parliamentary dress, and shortly afterwards M. d'Orléans came there also, with a grand suite. It had been arranged that the ceremony was to commence by a compliment from the Chief-President de Mesmes to M. le Duc de Berry, who was to reply to it. He was much troubled at this. Madame de Saint-Simon, to whom he unbosomed himself, found means, through a subaltern, to obtain the discourse of the Chief-President, and gave it to M. le Duc de Berry, to regulate his reply by. This, however, seemed too much for him; he admitted so to Madame de Saint-Simon, and that he knew not what to do. She proposed that I should take the work off his hands; and he was delighted with the expedient. I wrote, therefore, a page and a half full of common-sized paper in an ordinary handwriting. M. le Duc de Berry liked it, but thought it too long to be learnt. I abridged it; he wished it to be still shorter, so that at last there was not more than three-quarters of a page. He had learned it by heart, and repeated it in his cabinet the night before the ceremony to Madame de Saint-Simon, who encouraged him as much as she could.

At about half-past six o'clock we set out—M. le Duc d'Orléans, M. le Duc de Berry, myself, and M. le Duc

de Saint-Aignan, in one coach, several other coaches following. M. le Duc de Berry was very silent all the journey, appearing to be much occupied with the speech he had learned by heart. M. d'Orléans, on the contrary, was full of gaiety, and related some of his youthful adventures, and his wild doings by night in the streets of Paris. We arrived gently at the Porte de la Conference, that is to say—for it is now pulled down—at the end of the terrace, and of the Quai of the Tuileries.

We found there the trumpeters and drummers of M. le Duc de Berry's guard, who made a great noise all the rest of our journey, which ended at the Palais de Justice. Thence we went to the Sainte-Chapelle to hear mass. The Chapelle was filled with company, among which were many people of quality. The crowd of people from this building to the grand chamber was so great that a pin could not have fallen to the ground. On all sides, too, folks had climbed up to see what passed.

All the Princes of the blood, the bastards, the peers and the parliament, were assembled in the palace. When M. le Duc de Berry entered, everything was ready. Silence having with difficulty been obtained, the Chief-President paid his compliment to the Prince. When he had finished, it was for M. le Duc de Berry to reply. He half took off his hat, immediately put it back again, looked at the Chief-President, and said, "Monsieur;" after a moment's pause he repeated—"Monsieur." Then he looked at the assembly, and again said, "Monsieur." Afterwards he turned towards M. d'Orléans, who, like himself, was as red as fire, next to the Chief-President, and finally stopped short, nothing else than "Monsieur" having been able to issue from his mouth.

I saw distinctly the confusion of M. le Duc de

Berry, and sweated at it; but what could be done? The Duke turned again towards M. d'Orléans, who lowered his head. Both were dismayed. At last the Chief-President, seeing there was no other resource, finished this cruel scene by taking off his cap to M. le Duc de Berry, and inclining himself very low, as if the response was finished. Immediately afterwards he told the King's people to begin. The embarrassment of all the courtiers and the surprise of the magistracy may be imagined.

The renunciations were then read; and by these the King of Spain and his posterity gave up all claim to the throne of France, and M. le Duc d'Orléans, and M. le Duc de Berry to succeed to that of Spain. These and other forms occupied a long time. The chamber was all the while crowded to excess. There was not room for a single other person to enter. It was very late when all was over.

When everything was at an end M. de Saint-Aignan and I accompanied M. le Duc de Berry and M. le Duc d'Orléans in a coach to the Palais Royal. On the way the conversation was very quiet. M. le Duc de Berry appeared dispirited, embarrassed, and vexed. Even after we had partaken of a splendid and delicate dinner, to which an immense number of other guests sat down, he did not improve. We were conducted to the Porte Saint-Honoré with the same pomp as that in the midst of which we had entered Paris. During the rest of the journey to Versailles M. le Duc de Berry was as silent as ever.

To add to his vexation, as soon as he arrived at Versailles the Princesse de Montauban, without knowing a word of what had passed, set herself to exclaim, with her usual flattery, that she was charmed with the grace and the appropriate eloquence with which he had spoken at the Parliament, and paraphrased this theme

with all the praises of which it was susceptible. M. le Duc de Berry blushed with vexation without saying a word; she recommenced extolling his modesty, he blushing the more, and saying nothing. When at last he had got rid of her, he went to his own apartments, said not a word to the persons he found there, scarcely one to Madame his wife, but taking Madame de Saint-Simon with him, went into his library, and shut himself up alone there with her.

Throwing himself into an armchair he cried out that he was dishonoured, and wept scalding tears. Then he related to Madame de Saint-Simon, in the midst of sobs, how he had stuck fast at the Parliament, without being able to utter a word, said that he should everywhere be regarded as an ass and a blockhead, and repeated the compliments he had received from Madame de Montauban, who, he said, had laughed at and insulted him, knowing well what had happened; then, infuriated against her to the last degree, he called her by all sorts of names. Madame de Saint-Simon spared no exertion in order to calm M. de Berry, assuring him that it was impossible Madame de Montauban could know what had taken place at the Parliament, the news not having then reached Versailles, and that she had had no other object than flattery in addressing him. Nothing availed. Complaints and silence succeeded each other in the midst of tears. Then, suddenly falling upon the Duc de Beauvilliers and the King, and accusing the defects of his education: "They thought only," he exclaimed, "of making me stupid, and of stifling all my powers. I was a younger son. I coped with my brother. They feared the consequences; they annihilated me. I was taught only to play and to hunt, and they have succeeded in making me a fool and an ass, incapable of anything, the laughing-stock and disdain of every-

body." Madame de Saint-Simon was overpowered with compassion, and did everything to calm M. de Berry. Their strange *tête-à-tête* lasted nearly two hours, and resumed the next day but with less violence. By degrees M. le Duc de Berry became consoled, but never afterwards did any one dare to speak to him of his misadventure at the peace ceremony.

Let me here say that, the ceremony over, peace was signed at Utrecht on the 10th April, 1713, at a late hour of the night. It was published in Paris with great solemnity on the 22nd. Monsieur and Madame du Maine, who wished to render themselves popular, came from Sceaux to see the ceremony in the Place Royale, showed themselves on a balcony to the people, to whom they threw some money—a liberality that the King would not have permitted in anybody else. At night fires were lighted before the houses, several of which were illuminated. On the 25th a *Te Deum* was sung at Notre Dame, and in the evening there was a grand display of fireworks at the Grève, which was followed by a superb banquet given at the Hôtel de Ville by the Duc de Tresmes, the Governor of Paris, to a large number of distinguished persons of both sexes of the Court and the city, twenty-four violins playing during the repast.

I have omitted to mention the death of M. de Chevreuse, which took place between seven and eight o'clock in the morning on Saturday, the 5th of November, of the previous year (1712). I have so often alluded to M. de Chevreuse in the course of these pages, that I will content myself with relating here two anecdotes of him, which serve to paint a part of his character.

He was very forgetful, and adventures often happened to him in consequence, which diverted us amazingly. Sometimes his horses were put to and kept

waiting for him twelve or fifteen hours at a time. Upon one occasion in summer this happened at Vaucresson, whence he was going to dine at Dampierre. The coachman, first, then the postilion, grew tired of looking after the horses, and left them. Towards six o'clock at night the horses themselves were in their turn worn out, bolted, and a din was heard which shook the house. Everybody ran out, the coach was found smashed, the large door shivered in pieces; the garden railings, which enclosed both sides of the court, broken down; the gates in pieces; in short, damage was done that took a long time to repair. M. de Chevreuse, who had not been disturbed by this uproar even for an instant, was quite astonished when he heard of it. M. de Beauvilliers amused himself for a long time by reproaching him with it, and by asking the expense.

Another adventure happened to him also at Vaucresson, and covered him with real confusion, comical to see, every time it was mentioned. About ten o'clock one morning a M. Sconin, who had formerly been his steward, was announced. "Let him take a turn in the garden," said M. de Chevreuse, "and come back in half an hour." He continued what he was doing, and completely forgot his man. Towards seven o'clock in the evening Sconin was again announced. "In a moment," replied M. de Chevreuse, without disturbing himself. A quarter of an hour afterwards he called Sconin, and admitted him. "Ah, my poor Sconin!" said he, "I must offer you a thousand excuses for having caused you to lose your day."

"Not at all, Monseigneur," replied Sconin. "As I have had the honour of knowing you for many years, I comprehended this morning that the half-hour might be long, so I went to Paris, did some business there, before and after dinner, and here I am again."

M. de Chevreuse was confounded. Sconin did not keep silence, nor did the servants of the house. M. de Beauvilliers made merry with the adventure when he heard of it, and accustomed as M. de Chevreuse might be to his raillery, he could not bear to have this subject alluded to. I have selected two anecdotes out of a hundred others of the same kind, because they characterise the man.

The liberality of M. du Maine which we have related on the occasion of the proclamation of peace at Paris, and which was so popular, and so surprising when viewed in connection with the disposition of the King, soon took new development. The Jesuits, so skilful in detecting the foibles of monarchs, and so clever in seizing hold of everything which can protect themselves and answer their ends, showed to what extent they were masters of these arts. A new and assuredly a very original History of France, in three large folio volumes, appeared under the name of Father Daniel, who lived at Paris in the establishment of the Jesuits. The paper and the printing of the work were excellent; the style was admirable. Never was French so clear, so pure, so flowing, with such happy transitions; in a word, everything to charm and entice the reader; admirable preface, magnificent promises, short, learned dissertations, a pomp, an authority of the most seductive kind. As for the history, there was much romance in the first race, much in the second, and much mistiness in the early times of the third. In a word, all the work evidently appeared composed in order to persuade people—under the simple air of a man who set aside prejudices with discernment, and who only seeks the truth—that the majority of the Kings of the first race, several of the second, some even of the third, were bastards, whom this defect did not exclude from the throne, or affect in any way.

I say bluntly here what was very delicately veiled in the work, and yet plainly seen. The effect of the book was great; its vogue such, that everybody, even women, asked for it. The King spoke of it to several of his Court, asked if they had read it; the most sagacious early saw how much it was protected; it was the sole historical book the King and Madame de Maintenon had ever spoken of. Thus the work appeared at Versailles upon every table, nothing else was talked about, marvellous eulogies were lavished upon it, which were sometimes comical in the mouths of persons either very ignorant, or who, incapable of reading, pretended to read and relish this book.

But this surprising success did not last. People perceived that this history, which so cleverly unravelled the remote part, gave but a meagre account of modern days, except in so far as their military operations were concerned, of which even the minutest details were recorded. Of negotiations, cabals, Court intrigues, portraits, elevations, falls, and the main springs of events, there was not a word in all the work, except briefly, dryly, and with precision as in the gazettes, often more superficially. Upon legal matters, public ceremonies, fêtes of different times, there was also silence at the best, the same laconism; and when we come to the affairs of Rome and of the League, it is a pleasure to see the author glide over that dangerous ice on his Jesuit skates!

In due time critics condemned the work which, after so much applause, was recognised as a very wretched history, which had very industriously and very fraudulently answered the purpose for which it was written. It fell to the ground then; learned men wrote against it; but the principal and delicate point of the work was scarcely touched in France with the pen, so great was the danger.

Father Daniel obtained two thousand francs' pension for his history,—a prodigious recompense,—with a title of Historiographer of France. He enjoyed the fruits of his falsehood, and laughed at those who attacked him. Foreign countries did not swallow quite so readily these stories that declared such a number of our early kings bastards; but great care was taken not to let France be infected by the disagreeable truths therein published.

CHAPTER LXIII

IT is now time that I should say something of the infamous bull *Unigenitus,* which by the unsurpassed audacity and scheming of Father Le Tellier and his friends was forced upon the Pope and the world.

I need not enter into a very lengthy account of the celebrated Papal decree which has made so many martyrs, depopulated our schools, introduced ignorance, fanaticism, and misrule, rewarded vice, thrown the whole community into the greatest confusion, caused disorder everywhere, and established the most arbitrary and the most barbarous inquisition; evils which have doubled within the last thirty years. I will content myself with a word or two, and will not blacken further the pages of my Memoirs. Many pens have been occupied, and will be occupied, with this subject. It is not the apostleship of Jesus Christ that is in question, but that of the reverend fathers and their ambitious clients.

It is enough to say that the new bull condemned in set terms the doctrines of Saint-Paul (respected like oracles of the Holy Spirit ever since the time of our Saviour), and also those of Saint-Augustin, and of other fathers; doctrines which have always been adopted by the Popes, by the Councils, and by the Church itself. The bull, as soon as published, met with a violent opposition in Rome from the cardinals there, who went by sixes, by eights, and by tens, to complain of it to the Pope. They might well do so, for they had not been consulted in any way upon this

new constitution. Father Tellier and his friends had had the art and the audacity to obtain the publication of it without submitting it to them. The Pope, as I have said, had been forced into acquiescence, and now, all confused, knew not what to say. He protested, however, that the publication had been made without his knowledge, and put off the cardinals with compliments, excuses, and tears, which last he could always command.

The constitution had the same fate in France as in Rome. The cry against it was universal. The cardinals protested that it would never be received. They were shocked by its condemnation of the doctrines of Saint-Augustin and of the other fathers; terrified at its condemnation of Saint-Paul. There were not two opinions upon this terrible constitution. The Court, the city, and the provinces, as soon as they knew the nature of it, rose against it like one man.

In addition to the articles of this constitution which I have already named, there was one which excited infinite alarm and indignation, for it rendered the Pope master of every crown! As is well known, there is a doctrine of the Church, which says:—

An unjust excommunication ought not to hinder [*us*] *from doing our duty.*

The new constitution condemned this doctrine, and consequently proclaimed that—

An unjust excommunication ought to hinder [*us*] *from doing our duty.*

The enormity of this last is more striking than the simple truth of the proposition condemned. The second is a shadow which better throws up the light of the first. The results and the frightful consequences of the condemnation are as clear as day.

I think I have before said that Father Tellier, without any advances on my part, without, in fact, encour-

agement of any kind, insisted upon keeping up an intimacy with me, which I could not well repel, for it came from a man whom it would have been very dangerous indeed to have for an enemy. As soon as this matter of the constitution was in the wind, he came to me to talk about it. I did not disguise my opinion from him, nor did he disguise in any way from me the unscrupulous means he meant to employ in order to get this bull accepted by the clergy. Indeed, he was so free with me, showed me so plainly his knavery and cunning, that I was, as it were, transformed with astonishment and fright. I never could comprehend this openness in a man so false, so artificial, so profound, or see in what manner it could be useful to him.

One day he came to me by appointment, with a copy of the constitution in his hand in order that we might thoroughly discuss it. I was at Versailles. In order to understand what I am going to relate, I must give some account of my apartments there. Let me say, then, that I had a little back cabinet, leading out of another cabinet, but so arranged that you would not have thought it was there. It received no light except from the outer cabinet, its own windows being boarded up. In this back cabinet I had a bureau, some chairs, books, and all I needed; my friends called it my "shop," and in truth it did not ill resemble one.

Father Tellier came at the hour he had fixed. As chance would have it, M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse de Berry had invited themselves to a collation with Madame de Saint-Simon that morning. I knew that when they arrived I should no longer be master of my chamber or of my cabinet. I told Father Tellier this, and he was much vexed. He begged me so hard to find some place where we might be inaccessible to the company, that at last, pressed by him to excess, I said I knew of only one expedient by which we might

become free: and I told him that he must dismiss his *vatblé* (as the brother who always accompanies a monk is called), and that then, furnished with candles, we would go and shut ourselves up in my back cabinet, where we could neither be seen nor heard, if we took care not to speak loud when anybody approached. He thought the expedient admirable, dismissed his companion, and we sat down opposite each other, the bureau between us, with two candles alight upon it.

He immediately began to sing the praises of the *Constitution Unigenitus*, a copy of which he placed on the table. I interrupted him so as to come at once to the *excommunication* proposition. We discussed it with much politeness, but with little accord. I shall not pretend to report our dispute. It was warm and long. I pointed out to Father Tellier, that supposing the King and the little Dauphin were both to die, and this was a misfortune which might happen, the crown of France would by right of birth belong to the King of Spain; but according to the renunciation just made, it would belong to M. le Duc de Berry and his branch, or in default to M. le Duc d'Orléans. "Now," said I, "if the two brothers dispute the crown, and the Pope favouring the one should excommunicate the other, it follows, according to our new constitution, that the excommunicated must abandon all his claims, all his partisans, all his forces, and go over to the other side. For you say, *an unjust excommunication ought to hinder us from doing our duty*. So that in one fashion or another the Pope is master of all the crowns in his communion, is at liberty to take them away or to give them as he pleases, a liberty so many Popes have claimed and so many have tried to put in action."

My argument was simple, applicable, natural, and pressing: it offered itself, of itself. Therefore, the confessor was amazed by it; he blushed, he beat about

the bush, he could not collect himself. By degrees he did so, and replied to me in a manner that he doubtless thought would convince me at once. "If the case you suggest were to happen," he said, "and the Pope declaring for one disputant were to excommunicate the other and all his followers, such excommunication would not merely be *unjust,* it would be *false;* and it has never been decided that a *false* excommunication should hinder us from doing our duty."

"Ah! my father," I said, "your distinction is subtle and clever, I admit. I admit, too, I did not expect it, but permit me some few more objections, I beseech you. Will the Ultramontanes admit the nullity of the excommunication? Is it not null as soon as it is unjust? If the Pope has the power to excommunicate unjustly, and to enforce obedience to his excommunication, who can limit power so unlimited, and why should not his *false* (or nullified) excommunication be as much obeyed and respected as his *unjust* excommunication? Suppose the case I have imagined were to happen. Suppose the Pope were to excommunicate one of the two brothers. Do you think it would be easy to make your subtle distinction between a false and an unjust excommunication understood by the people, the soldiers, the bourgeois, the officers, the lords, the women, at the very moment when they would be preparing to act and to take up arms? You see I point out great inconveniences that may arise if the new doctrine be accepted, and if the Pope should claim the power of deposing kings, disposing of their crowns, and releasing their subjects from the oath of fidelity in opposition to the formal words of Jesus Christ and of all the Scripture."

My words transported the Jesuit, for I had touched the right spring in spite of his effort to hide it. He said nothing personal to me, but he fumed. The more

he restrained himself for me the less he did so for the matter in hand. As though to indemnify himself for his moderation on my account, he launched out the more, upon the subject we were discussing. In his heat, no longer master of himself, many things escaped him, silence upon which I am sure he would afterwards have bought very dearly. He told me so many things of the violence that would be used to make his constitution accepted, things so monstrous, so atrocious, so terrible, and with such extreme passion that I fell into a veritable syncope. I saw him right in front of me between two candles, only the width of the table between us (I have described elsewhere his horrible physiognomy). My hearing and my sight became bewildered. I was seized, while he was speaking, with the full idea of what a Jesuit was. Here was a man who, by his state and his vows, could hope for nothing for his family or for himself; who could not expect an apple or a glass of wine more than his brethren; who was approaching an age when he would have to render account of all things to God, and who, with studied deliberation and mighty artifice, was going to throw the state and religion into the most terrible flames, and commence a most frightful persecution for questions which affected him in nothing, nor touched in any way the honour of the School of Molina!

His profundities, the violence he spoke of—all this together, threw me into such an ecstasy, that suddenly I interrupted him by saying:

"My father, how old are you?"

The extreme surprise which painted itself upon his face as I looked at him with all my eyes, fetched back my senses, and his reply brought me completely to myself. "Why do you ask?" he replied, smiling. The effort that I made over myself to escape such a unique

proposito, the terrible value of which I fully appreciated, furnished me an issue. "Because," said I, "never have I looked at you so long as I have now, you in front of me, these two candles between us, and your face is so fresh and so healthy, with all your labours, that I am surprised at it."

He swallowed the answer, or so well pretended to do so, that he said nothing of it then nor since, never ceasing when he met me to speak to me as openly, and as frequently as before, I seeking him as little as ever. He replied at that time that he was seventy-four years old; that in truth he was very well; that he had accustomed himself, from his earliest years, to a hard life and to labour; and then went back to the point at which I had interrupted him. We were compelled, however, to be silent for a time, because people came into my cabinet, and Madame de Saint-Simon, who knew of our interview, had some difficulty to keep the coast clear.

For more than two hours we continued our discussion, he trying to put me off with his subtleties and authoritativeness, I offering but little opposition to him, feeling that opposition was of no use, all his plans being already decided. We separated without having persuaded each other, he with many flatteries upon my intelligence, praying me to reflect well upon the matter; I replying that my reflections were all made, and that my capacity could not go farther. I let him out by the little back door of my cabinet, so that nobody perceived him, and as soon as I had closed it, I threw myself into a chair like a man out of breath, and I remained there a long time alone, reflecting upon the strange kind of ecstasy I had been in, and the horror it had caused me.

The results of this *constitution* were, as I have said, terrible to the last degree; every artifice, every cruelty

was used, in order to force it down the throats of the clergy, and hence the confusion and sore trouble which arose all over the realm. But it is time now for me to touch upon other matters.

Towards the close of this year, 1713, peace with the Emperor seemed so certain, that the King disbanded sixty battalions and eighteen men per company of the regiment of the guards, and one hundred and six squadrons; of which squadrons twenty-seven were dragoons. At peace now with the rest of Europe he had no need of so many troops, even although the war against the Empire had continued; fortunately, however, it did not. Negotiations were set on foot, and on the 6th of March of the following year, 1714, after much debate, they ended successfully. On that day, in fact, peace was signed at Rastadt. It was shortly afterwards published at Paris, a *Te Deum* sung, and bonfires lighted at night; a grand collation was given at the Hôtel de Ville by the Duc de Tresmes, who at midnight also gave, in his own house, a splendid banquet, at which were present many ladies, foreigners, and courtiers.

This winter was fertile in balls at the Court; there were several, fancy-dress and masked, given by M. le Duc de Berry, by Madame la Duchesse de Berry, M. le Duc, and others. There were some also at Paris, and at Sceaux, where Madame du Maine gave many *fêtes* and played many comedies, everybody going there from Paris and the Court—M. du Maine doing the honours. Madame la Duchesse de Berry was in the family way, and went to no dances out of her own house. The King permitted her, on account of her condition, to sup with him in a *robe de chambre*, as under similar circumstances he had permitted the two Dauphines to do.

At the opera, one night this winter, the Abbé

Servien, not liking certain praises of the King contained in a Prologue, let slip a bitter joke in ridicule of them. The pit took it up, repeated it, and applauded it. Two days afterwards, the Abbé Servien was arrested and taken to Vincennes, forbidden to speak to anybody and allowed no servant to wait upon him. For form's sake seals were put upon his papers, but he was not a man likely to have any fit for aught else than to light the fire. Though more than sixty-five years old, he was strangely debauched.

The Duc de la Rochefoucauld died on Thursday, the 11th of January, at Versailles, seventy-nine years of age, and blind. I have spoken of him so frequently in the course of these memoirs, that I will do nothing more now than relate a few particulars respecting him, which will serve in some sort to form his portrait.

He had much honour, worth, and probity. He was noble, good, magnificent, ever willing to serve his friends; a little too much so, for he oftentimes wearied the King with importunities on their behalf. Without any intellect or discernment he was proud to excess, coarse and rough in his manners—disagreeable even, and embarrassed with all except his flatterers; like a man who does not know how to receive a visit, enter or leave a room. He scarcely went anywhere except to pay the indispensable compliments demanded by marriage, death, etc., and even then as little as he could. He lived in his own house so shut up that no one went to see him except on these same occasions. He gave himself up almost entirely to his valets, who mixed themselves in the conversation; and you were obliged to treat them with all sorts of attentions if you wished to become a frequenter of the house.

I shall never forget what happened to us at the death of the Prince of Vaudemont's son, by which M. de la

Rochefoucauld's family came in for a good inheritance. We were at Marly. The King had been stag-hunting. M. de Chevreuse, whom I found when the King was being unbooted, proposed that we should go and pay our compliments to M. de la Rochefoucauld. We went. Upon entering, what was our surprise, nay, our shame, to find M. de la Rochefoucauld playing at chess with one of his servants in livery, seated opposite to him! Speech failed us. M. de la Rochefoucauld perceived it, and remained confounded himself. He stammered, he grew confused, he tried to excuse what we had seen, saying that this lackey played very well, and that chess-players played with everybody. M. de Chevreuse had not come to contradict him, neither had I; we turned the conversation, therefore, and left as soon as possible. As soon as we were outside we opened our minds to each other, and said what we thought of this rare meeting, which, however, we did not make public.

M. de Rochefoucauld, towards the end of his career at Court, became so importunate, as I have said, for his friends, that the King was much relieved by his death. Such have been his sentiments at the death of nearly all those whom he had liked and favoured.

Of the courage of M. de la Rochefoucauld, courtier as he was, in speaking to the King, I will relate an instance. It was during one of the visits at Marly, in the gardens of which the King was amusing himself with a fountain that he set at work. I know not what led to it, but the King, usually so reserved, spoke with him of the bishop of Saint-Pons, then in disgrace on account of the affairs of Port Royal. M. de la Rochefoucauld let him speak on to the end, and then began to praise the bishop. The discouraging silence of the King warned him; he persisted, however, and related how the bishop, mounted upon a mule, and visiting

one day his diocese, found himself in a path which grew narrower at every step, and which ended in a precipice. There were no means of getting out of it except by going back, but this was impossible, there not being enough space to turn round or to alight. The holy bishop (for such was his term as I well remarked) lifted his eyes to Heaven, let go the bridle, and abandoned himself to Providence. Immediately his mule rose up upon its hind legs, and thus upright, the bishop still astride, turned round until its head was where its tail had been. The beast thereupon returned along the path until it found an opening into a good road. Everybody around the King imitated his silence, which excited the Duke to comment upon what he had just related. This generosity charmed me, and surprised all who were witness of it.

The day after the death of M. de la Rochefoucauld, the Chancellor took part in a very tragic scene. A Vice-bailli of Alençon had just lost a trial, in which, apparently, his honour, or his property, was much interested. He came to Pontchartrain's, where the Chancellor was at the moment, and waited until he came out into the court to get into his carriage. The Vice-bailli then asked him for a revision of the verdict. The Chancellor, with much gentleness and goodness, represented to the man that the law courts were open to him if he insisted to appeal, but that as to a revision of the verdict, it was contrary to usage; and turned to get into his coach. While he was getting in, the unhappy bailli said there was a shorter way of escaping from trouble, and stabbed himself twice with a poniard. At the cries of the domestics the Chancellor descended from the coach, had the man carried into a room, and sent for a doctor, and a confessor. The bailli made confession very peacefully, and died an hour afterwards.

I have spoken in its time of the exile of Charmel and its causes, of which the chief was his obstinate refusal to present himself before the King. The vexation of the King against people who withdrew from him was always very great. In this case, it never passed away, but hardened into a strange cruelty, to speak within limits. Charmel, attacked with the stone, asked permission to come to Paris to undergo an operation. The permission was positively refused. Time pressed. The operation was obliged to be done in the country. It was so severe, and perhaps so badly done, that Charmel died three days afterwards full of penitence and piety. He had led a life remarkable for its goodness, was without education, but had religious fervour that supplied the want of it. He was sixty-eight years of age.

The Maréchale de la Ferté died at Paris, at the same time, more than eighty years old. She was sister of the Comtesse d'Olonne, very rich and a widow. The beauty of the two sisters, and the excesses of their lives, made a great stir. No women, not even those most stigmatized for their gallantry, dared to see them, or to be seen anywhere with them. That was the way then; the fashion has changed since. When they were old and nobody cared for them, they tried to become devout. They lodged together, and one Ash-Wednesday went and heard a sermon. This sermon, which was upon fasting and penitence, terrified them.

"My sister," they said to each other on their return, "it was all true; there was no joke about it; we must do penance, or we are lost. But, my sister, what shall we do?" After having well turned it over: "My sister," said Madame d'Olonne, "this is what we must do; we must make our servants fast." Madame d'Olonne thought she had very well met the difficulty. However, at last, she set herself to work in earnest, at

piety and penitence, and died three months after her sister, the Maréchale de la Ferté. It will not be forgotten, that it was under cover of the Maréchale that a natural child was first legitimated without naming the mother, in order that by this example, the King's natural children might be similarly honoured, without naming Madame de Montespan, as I have related in its place.

CHAPTER LXIV

THE Queen of Spain, for a long time violently attacked with the king's evil around the face and neck, was just now at the point of death. Obtaining no relief from the Spanish doctors, she wished to have Helvetius, and begged the King by an express command to send him to her. Helvetius, much inconvenienced, and knowing besides the condition of the Princess, did not wish to go, but the King expressly commanded him. He set out then in a post-chaise, followed by another in case his own should break down, and arrived thus at Madrid on the 11th of February, 1714. As soon as he had seen the Queen, he said there was nothing but a miracle could save her. The King of Spain did not discontinue sleeping with her until the 9th. On the 14th she died, with much courage, consciousness, and piety.

Despair was general in Spain, where this Queen was universally adored. There was not a family which did not lament her, not a person who has since been consoled. The King of Spain was extremely touched, but somewhat in a royal manner. Thus, when out shooting one day, he came close to the convoy by which the body of his queen was being conveyed to the Escurial; he looked at it, followed it with his eyes, and continued his sport! Are these princes made like other human beings?

The death of the Queen led to amazing changes, such as the most prophetic could not have foreseen. Let me here, then, relate the events that followed this misfortune.

I must commence by saying, that the principal cause which had so long and scandalously hindered us from making peace with the Emperor, was a condition, which Madame des Ursins wished to insert in the treaty, (and which the King of Spain supported through thick and thin) to the effect that she should be invested with a *bona fide* sovereignty. She had set her heart upon this, and the King of Spain was a long time before he would consent to any terms of peace that did not concede it to her. It was not until the King had uttered threats against him that he would give way. As for Madame des Ursins, she had counted upon this sovereignty with as much certainty as though it were already between her fingers. She had counted, too, with equal certainty upon exchanging it with our King, for the sovereignty of Touraine and the Amboise country; and had actually charged her faithful Aubigny to buy her some land near Amboise to build her there a vast palace, with courts and outbuildings; to furnish it with magnificence, to spare neither gilding nor paintings, and to surround the whole with the most beautiful gardens. She meant to live there as sovereign lady of the country. Aubigny had at once set about the work to the surprise of everybody: for no one could imagine for whom such a grand building could be designed. He kept the secret, pretended he was building a house for himself and pushed on the work so rapidly that just as peace was concluded without the stipulation respecting Madame des Ursins being inserted in the treaty, nearly all was finished. Her sovereignty scheme thoroughly failed; and to finish at once with that mad idea, I may as well state that, ashamed of her failure, she gave this palace to Aubigny, who lived there all the rest of his life: Chanteloup, for so it was called, has since passed into the hands of Madame d'Armantières, his daughter. It

is one of the most beautiful and most singular places in all France, and the most superbly furnished.

This sovereignty, coveted by Madame des Ursins, exceedingly offended Madame de Maintenon and wounded her pride. She felt, with jealousy, that the grand airs Madame des Ursins gave herself were solely the effect of the protection she had accorded her. She could not bear to be outstripped in importance by the woman she herself had elevated. The King, too, was much vexed with Madame des Ursins; vexed also to see peace delayed; and to be obliged to speak with authority and menace to the King of Spain, in order to compel him to give up the idea of this precious sovereignty. The King of Spain did not yield until he was threatened with abandonment by France. It may be imagined what was the rage of Madame des Ursins upon missing her mark after having, before the eyes of all Europe, fired at it with so much perseverance, nay, with such unmeasured obstinacy. From this time there was no longer the same concert between Madame de Maintenon and Madame des Ursins that had formerly existed. But the latter had reached such a point in Spain, that she thought this was of no consequence.

It has been seen with what art Madame des Ursins had unceasingly isolated the King of Spain; in what manner she had shut him up with the Queen, and rendered him inaccessible, not only to his Court but to his grand officers, his ministers, even his valets, so that he was served by only three or four attendants, all French, and entirely under her thumb. At the death of the Queen this solitude continued. Under the pretext that his grief demanded privacy, she persuaded the King to leave his palace and to instal himself in a quiet retreat, the Palace of Medina-Celi, near the Buen-Retiro, at the other end of the city. She pre-

ferred this because it was infinitely smaller than the Royal Palace, and because few people, in consequence, could approach the King. She herself took the Queen's place; and in order to have a sort of pretext for being near the King, in the same solitude, she caused herself to be named governess of his children. But in order to be always there, and so that nobody should know when they were together, she had a large wooden corridor made from the cabinet of the King to the apartment of his children, in which she lodged. By this means they could pass from one to the other without being perceived, and without traversing the long suite of rooms, filled with courtiers, that were between the two apartments. In this manner it was never known whether the King was alone or with Madame des Ursins; or which of the two was in the apartments of the other. When they were together or how long is equally unknown. This corridor, roofed and glazed, was proceeded with in so much haste, that the work went on, in spite of the King's devotion, on fête days and Sundays. The whole Court, which perfectly well knew for what use this corridor was intended, was much displeased. Those who directed the work were the same. Of this good proof was given. One day, the Comptroller of the royal buildings, who had been ordered to keep the men hard at it, Sundays and fête days, asked the Père Robinet, the King's confessor, and the only good one he ever had; he asked, I say, in one of those rooms Madame des Ursins was so anxious to avoid, and in the presence of various courtiers, if the work was to be continued on the morrow, a Sunday, and the next day, the Fête of the Virgin. Robinet replied, that the King had said nothing to the contrary; and met a second appeal with the same answer. At the third, he added, that before saying anything he would wait till the

King spoke on the subject. At the fourth appeal, he lost patience, and said that if for the purpose of destroying what had been commenced, he believed work might be done even on Easter-day itself; but if for the purpose of continuing the corridor, he did not think a Sunday or a fête day was a fitting time. All the Court applauded; but Madame des Ursins, to whom this sally was soon carried, was much irritated.

It was suspected that she thought of becoming something more than the mere companion of the King. There were several princes. Reports were spread which appeared equivocal and which terrified. It was said that the King had no need of posterity, with all the children it had pleased God to bless him with; but now he only needed a wife who could take charge of those children. Not content with passing all her days with the King, and allowing him, like the deceased Queen, to work with his ministers only in her presence, the Princesse des Ursins felt that to render this habit lasting she must assure herself of him at all moments. He was accustomed to take the air, and he was in want of it all the more now because he had been much shut up during the last days of the Queen's illness, and the first which followed her death. Madame des Ursins chose four or five gentlemen to accompany him, to the exclusion of all others, even his chief officers, and people still more necessary. These gentlemen charged with the amusement of the King, were called *recreadores*. With so much circumspection, importunity, preparation, and rumour carefully circulated, it was not doubted that Madame des Ursins intended to marry him; and the opinion, as well as the fear, became general. The King (Louis XIV.), was infinitely alarmed; and Madame de Maintenon, who had twice tried to be proclaimed Queen and twice failed, was distracted with jealousy. However, if

Madame des Ursins flattered herself then, it was not for long.

The King of Spain, always curious to learn the news from France, often demanded them of his confessor, the only man to whom he could speak who was not under the thumb of Madame des Ursins. The clever and courageous Robinet, as disturbed as others at the progress of the design, which nobody in the two Courts of France and Spain doubted was in execution, allowed himself to be pressed by questions—in an embrasure where the King had drawn him—played the reserved and the mysterious in order to excite curiosity more. When he saw it was sufficiently excited, he said that since he was forced to speak, his news from France was the same as that at Madrid, where no one doubted that the King would do the Princesse des Ursins the honour to espouse her. The King blushed and hastily replied, "Marry her! oh no! not that!" and quitted him.

Whether the Princesse des Ursins was informed of this sharp repartee, or whether she despaired already of success, she changed about; and judging that this interregnum in the Palace of Medina-Celi could not last for ever, resolved to assure herself of the King by a Queen who should owe to her such a grand marriage, and who, having no other support, would throw herself into her arms by gratitude and necessity. With this view she explained herself to Alberoni, who, since the death of the Duc de Vendôme, had remained at Madrid charged with the affairs of Parma; and proposed to him the marriage of the Princess of Parma, daughter of the Duchess and of the late Duke of Parma, who had married the widow of his brother.

Alberoni could with difficulty believe his ears. An alliance so disproportioned appeared to him so much the more incredible, because he thought the Court of

France would never consent to it, and that without its consent the marriage could not be concluded. The Princess in question was the issue of double illegitimacy; by her father descended from a pope, by her mother from a natural daughter of Charles Quint. She was daughter of a petty Duke of Parma, and of a mother, entirely Austrian, sister of the Dowager Empress and of the Dowager Queen of Spain (whose acts had excited such disapproval that she was sent from her exile at Toledo to Bayonne), sister too of the Queen of Portugal, who had induced the King, her husband, to receive the Archduke at Lisbon, and to carry the war into Spain. It did not seem reasonable, therefore, that such a Princess would be accepted as a wife for the King of Spain.

Nothing of all this, however, stopped the Princesse des Ursins; her own interest was the most pressing consideration with her; the will of the King of Spain was entirely subject to her; she felt all the change towards her of our King and of Madame de Maintenon; she no longer hoped for a return of their favour; she believed that she must look around for support against the very authority which had established her so powerfully, and which could destroy her; and occupied herself solely in pushing forward a marriage from which she expected everything by making the same use of the new queen as she had made of the one just dead. The King of Spain was devout, he absolutely wanted a wife, the Princesse des Ursins was of an age when her charms were but the charms of art; in a word, she set Alberoni to work, and it may be believed she was not scrupulous as to her means as soon as they were persuaded at Parma that she was serious and not joking. Orry, always united with Madame des Ursins, and all-powerful by her means, was her sole confidant in this important affair.

At that time the Marquis de Brancas was French ambassador at Madrid. He had flattered himself that Madame des Ursins would make him one of the grandees of Spain. Instead of doing so she simply bestowed upon him the order of the Golden Fleece. He had never pardoned her for this. Entirely devoted to Madame de Maintenon, he became on that very account an object of suspicion to Madame des Ursins, who did not doubt that he cherished a grudge against her, on account of the favour he had missed. She allowed him no access to her, and had her eyes open upon all he did. Brancas in like manner watched all her doings. The confessor, Robinet, confided to him his fears respecting Madame des Ursins, and the chiefs of a court universally discontented went and opened their hearts to him, thinking it was France alone which could set to rights the situation of Spain.

Brancas appreciated all the importance of what was told him, but warned by the fate of the Abbé d'Estrées, fearing even for his couriers, he took the precaution of sending word to the King that he had pressing business to acquaint him with, which he could not trust to paper, and that he wished to be allowed to come to Versailles for a fortnight. The reply was the permission asked for, accompanied, however, with an order to communicate *en route* with the Duc de Berwick, who was about to pass to Barcelona.

Madame des Ursins, who always found means to be informed of everything, immediately knew of Brancas's projected journey, and determined to get the start of him. At once she had sixteen relays of mules provided upon the Bayonne road, and suddenly sent off to France, on Holy Thursday, Cardinal del Giudice, grand inquisitor and minister of state, who had this mean complaisance for her. She thus struck two blows at once; she got rid, at least for a time, of a Car-

dinal minister who troubled her, and anticipated Brancas, which in our Court was no small point.

Brancas, who felt all the importance of arriving first, followed the Cardinal on Good Friday, and moved so well that he overtook him at Bayonne, at night while he was asleep; Brancas passed straight on, charging the Commandant to amuse and to delay the Cardinal as long as possible on the morrow; gained ground, and arrived at Bordeaux with twenty-eight post-horses that he had carried off with him from various stations, to keep them from the Cardinal. He arrived in Paris in this manner two days before the other, and went straight to Marly where the King was, to explain the business that had led him there. He had a long audience with the King, and received a lodging for the rest of the visit.

The Cardinal del Giudice rested four or five days at Paris, and then came to Marly, where he was introduced to the King. The Cardinal was somewhat embarrassed; he was charged with no business; all his mission was to praise Madame des Ursins, and complain of the Marquis de Brancas. These praises of Madame des Ursins were but vague; she had not sufficient confidence in the Cardinal to admit to him her real position in our Court, and to give him instructions accordingly, so that what he had to say was soon all said; against the Marquis de Brancas he had really no fact to allege, his sole crime that he was too sharp-sighted and not sufficiently devoted to the Princess.

The Cardinal was a courtier, a man of talent, of business, of intrigue, who felt, with annoyance, that for a person of his condition and weight, such a commission as he bore was very empty. He appeared exceedingly agreeable in conversation, of pleasant manners, and was much liked in good society. He was assiduous in his attentions to the King, without im-

portuning him for audiences that were unnecessary; and by all his conduct, he gave reason for believing that he suspected Madame des Ursins' decadence in our Court, and sought to gain esteem and confidence, so as to become by the support of the King, prime minister in Spain; but as we shall soon see, his ultramontane hobbies hindered the accomplishment of his measures. All the success of his journey consisted in hindering Brancas from returning to Spain. This was no great punishment, for Brancas had nothing more to hope for from Madame des Ursins, and was not a man to lose his time for nothing.

Up to this period not a word had been said to the King (Louis XIV.) by the King of Spain upon the subject of his marriage; not a hint had been given that he meant to remarry, much less with a Parma princess. This proceeding, grafted upon the sovereignty claimed by the Princesse des Ursins, and all her conduct with the King of Spain since the death of the Queen, resolved our King to disgrace her without appeal.

A remark upon Madame des Ursins, accompanied by a smile, escaped from the King, generally so complete a master of himself, and appeared enigmatical to such an extent, although striking, that Torcy, to whom it was addressed, understood nothing. In his surprise, he related to Castries what the King had said; Castries told it to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, who reported it to M. d'Orléans and to me. We racked our brains to comprehend it, but in vain; nevertheless such an unintelligible remark upon a person like Madame des Ursins, who up to this time had been on such good terms with the King and Madame de Maintenon, did not appear to me to be favourable. I was confirmed in this view by what had just happened with regard to her sovereignty; but I was a

thousand leagues from the thunderbolt which this lightning announced, and which only declared itself to us by its fall.

It was not until the 27th of June that the King was made acquainted by the King of Spain with his approaching marriage. Of course, through other channels, he had not failed to hear of it long before. He passed in the lightest and gentlest manner in the world over this project, and the mystery so long and so complete with which it had been kept from him, stranger, if possible, than the marriage itself. He could not hinder it; but from this moment he was sure of his vengeance against her who had arranged and brought it about in this manner. The disgrace of Madame des Ursins was in fact determined on between the King and Madame de Maintenon, but in a manner so secret before and since, that I know nobody who has found out by whom or how it was carried out. It is good to admit our ignorance, and not to give fictions and inventions in place of what we are unacquainted with.

I know not why, but a short time after this, the Princesse des Ursins conceived such strong suspicion of the lofty and enterprising spirit of the Princess of Parma that she repented having made this marriage, and wished to break it off. She brought forward, therefore, I know not what difficulties, and despatched a courier to Rome to Cardinal Acquaviva, who did the King of Spain's business there, ordering him to delay his journey to Parma, where he had been commanded to ask the hand of the Princess, and to see her provisionally espoused. But Madame des Ursins had changed her mind too late. The courier did not find Acquaviva at Rome. That Cardinal was already far away on the road to Parma, so that there were no means of retreat.

Acquaviva was received with great honour and much magnificence; he made his demand, but delayed the espousals as long as he could, and this caused much remark. The marriage, which was to have been celebrated on the 25th of August, did not take place until the 15th of September. Immediately after the ceremony the new Queen set out for Spain.

An envoy from Parma, with news of the marriage of the Princess, arrived at Fontainebleau on the 11th October, and had an audience with the King. This was rather late in the day. For dowry she had one hundred thousand pistoles, and three hundred thousand livres' worth of jewels. She had embarked for Alicante at Sestri di Levante. A violent tempest sickened her of the sea. She landed, therefore, at Monaco, in order to traverse by land Provence, Languedoc, and Guienne, so as to reach Bayonne, and see there the Queen Dowager of Spain; sister of her mother, and widow of Charles II. Desgranges, master of the ceremonies, was to meet her in Provence, with orders to follow her, and to command the governors, lieutenants-general, and intendants to follow her also, and serve her, though she travelled incognito.

The new Queen of Spain, on arriving at Pau, found the Queen Dowager, her aunt, had come expressly from Bayonne to meet her. As they approached each other, they both descended at the same time, and after saluting, mounted alone into a beautiful calèche that the Queen Dowager had brought with her, and that she presented to her niece. They supped together alone. The Queen Dowager conducted her to Saint-Jean Pied-de-Port (for in that country, as in Spain, the entrances to mountain passes are called *ports*). They separated there, the Queen Dowager making the Queen many presents, among others a garniture of diamonds. The Duc de Saint-Aignan joined the

Queen of Spain at Pau, and accompanied her by command of the King to Madrid. She sent Grillo, a Genoese noble, whom she has since made grandee of Spain, to thank the King for sending her the Duc de Saint-Aignan, and for the present he brought with him. The officers of her household had been named by Madame des Ursins.

The Queen of Spain advanced towards Madrid with the attendants sent to accompany her. She was to be met by the King of Spain at Guadalaxara, which is about the same distance from Madrid as Paris is from Fontainebleau. He arrived there, accompanied by the attendants that the Princesse des Ursins had placed near him, to keep him company, and to allow no one else to approach him. She followed in her coach, so as to arrive at the same time, and immediately afterwards he shut himself up alone with her, and saw nobody until he went to bed. This was on the 22nd of December. The next day the Princesse des Ursins set out with a small suite for a little place, seven leagues further, called Quadraqué, where the Queen was to sleep that night. Madame des Ursins counted upon enjoying all the gratitude that the Queen would feel for the unhoped-for grandeur she had obtained by her means; counted upon passing the evening with her, and upon accompanying her next day to Guadalaxara. She found, upon arriving at Quadraqué, that the Queen had already reached there. She at once entered into a lodging that had been prepared for her, opposite that of the Queen. She was in a full Court dress. After adjusting it in a hurried manner, she went to the Queen. The coldness and stiffness of her reception surprised her extremely. She attributed it in the first place to the embarrassment of the Queen, and tried to melt this ice. Everybody withdrew, in order to leave the two alone.

Then the conversation commenced. The Queen would not long allow Madame des Ursins to continue it; but burst out into reproaches against her for her manners, and for appearing there in a dress that showed want of respect for the company she was in. Madame des Ursins, whose dress was proper, and who, on account of her respectful manners and her discourse, calculated to win the Queen, believed herself to be far from meriting this treatment, was strangely surprised, and wished to excuse herself; but the Queen immediately began to utter offensive words, to cry out, to call aloud, to demand the officers of the guard, and sharply to command Madame des Ursins to leave her presence. The latter wished to speak and defend herself against the reproaches she heard; but the Queen, increasing her fury and her menaces, cried out to her people to drive this mad woman from her presence and from the house; and absolutely had her turned out by the shoulders. Immediately afterwards, she called Amenzago, lieutenant of the body-guard, and at the same time the écuyer who had the control of her equipages. She ordered the first to arrest Madame des Ursins, and not quit her until he had placed her in a coach, with two sure officers of the guard and fifteen soldiers as sentinels over her; the second she commanded to provide instantly a coach and six, with two or three footmen, and send off in it the Princesse des Ursins towards Burgos and Bayonne, without once stopping on the road. Amenzago tried to represent to the Queen that the King of Spain alone had the power to give such commands; but she haughtily asked him if he had not received an order from the King of Spain to obey her in everything, without reserve and without comment. It was true he had received such an order, though nobody knew a word about it.

Madame des Ursins was then immediately arrested, and put into a coach with one of her waiting-women, without having had time to change her costume or her head-dress, to take any precaution against the cold, to provide herself with any money or other things, and without any kind of refreshment in the coach, or a chemise; nothing, in fact, to change or to sleep in! She was shipped off thus (with two officers of the guard, who were ready as soon as the coach), in full Court dress, just as she left the Queen. In the very short and tumultuous interval which elapsed, she sent a message to the Queen, who flew into a fresh passion upon not being obeyed, and made her set out immediately.

It was then nearly seven o'clock in the evening, two days before Christmas, the ground all covered with snow and ice, and the cold extreme and very sharp and bitter, as it always is in Spain. As soon as the Queen learned that the Princesse des Ursins was out of Quadraqué, she wrote to the King of Spain, by an officer of the guards whom she despatched to Guadalaxara. The night was so dark that it was only by means of the snow that anything could be seen.

It is not easy to represent the state of Madame des Ursins in the coach. An excess of astonishment and bewilderment prevailed at first, and suspended all other sentiment; but grief, vexation, rage, and despair, soon followed. In their turn succeeded sad and profound reflections upon a step so violent, so unheard-of, and so unjustifiable as she thought. Then she hoped everything from the friendship of the King of Spain and his confidence in her; pictured his anger and surprise, and those of the group of attached servitors, by whom she had surrounded him, and who would be so interested in exciting the King in her favour. The long winter's night passed thus; the cold was terrible, there was

nothing to ward it off; the coachman actually lost the use of one hand. The morning advanced; a halt was necessary in order to bait the horses; as for the travellers there is nothing for them ever in the Spanish inns. You are simply told where each thing you want is sold. The meat is ordinarily alive; the wine, thick, flat, and strong; the bread bad; the water is often worthless; as to beds, there are some, but only for the mule-drivers, so that you must carry everything with you, and neither Madame des Ursins nor those with her had anything whatever. Eggs, where they could find any, were their sole resource; and these, fresh or not, simply boiled, supported them during all the journey.

Until this halt for the horses, silence had been profound and uninterrupted; now it was broken. During all this long night the Princesse des Ursins had had leisure to think upon the course she should adopt, and to compose her face. She spoke of her extreme surprise, and of the little that had passed between her and the Queen. In like manner the two officers of the guard accustomed, as was all Spain, to fear and respect her more than their King, replied to her from the bottom of that abyss of astonishment from which they had not yet arisen. The horses being put to, the coach soon started again. Soon, too, the Princesse des Ursins found that the assistance she expected from the King did not arrive. No rest, no provisions, nothing to put on, until Saint-Jean de Luz was reached. As she went further on, as time passed and no news came, she felt she had nothing more to hope for. It may be imagined what rage succeeded in a woman so ambitious, so accustomed to publicly reign, so rapidly and shamefully precipitated from the summit of power by the hand that she herself had chosen as the most solid support of her grandeur. The Queen had not

replied to the last two letters Madame des Ursins had written to her. This studied negligence was of bad augury, but who would have imagined treatment so strange and so unheard-of?

Her nephews, Lanti and Chalais, who had permission to join her, completed her dejection. Yet she was faithful to herself. Neither tears nor regrets, neither reproaches nor the slightest weakness escaped her; not a complaint even of the excessive cold, of the deprivation of all things, or of the extreme fatigue of such a journey. The two officers who guarded her could not contain their admiration.

At Saint-Jean de Luz, where she arrived on the 14th of January, 1715, she found at last her corporeal ills at an end. She obtained a bed, change of dress, food, and her liberty. The guards, their officers, and the coach which had brought her, returned; she remained with her waiting-maid and her nephews. She had leisure to think what she might expect from Versailles. In spite of her mad sovereignty scheme so long maintained, and her hardihood in arranging the King of Spain's marriage without consulting our King, she flattered herself she should find resources in a Court she had so long governed. It was from Saint-Jean de Luz that she despatched a courier charged with letters for the King, for Madame de Maintenon, and for her friends. She briefly gave us an account in those letters of the thunderbolt which had fallen on her, and asked permission to come to the Court to explain herself more in detail. She waited for the return of her courier in this her first place of liberty and repose, which of itself is very agreeable. But this first courier despatched, she sent off Lanti with letters written less hastily, and with instructions. Lanti saw the King in his cabinet on the last of January, and remained there some moments. From him it was

known that as soon as Madame des Ursins despatched her first courier, she had sent her compliments to the Queen Dowager of Spain at Bayonne, who would not receive them. What cruel mortifications attend a fall from a throne! Let us now return to Guadalaxara.

CHAPTER LXV

THE officer of the guards, whom the Queen despatched with a letter for the King of Spain as soon as Madame des Ursins was out of Quadraqué, found the King upon the point of going to bed. He appeared moved, sent a short reply to the Queen, and gave no orders. The officer returned immediately. What is singular is, that the secret was so well kept that it did not transpire until the next morning at ten o'clock. It may be imagined what emotion seized the whole Court, and what divers movements there were among all at Guadalaxara. However, nobody dared to speak to the King, and much expectation was built upon the reply he had sent to the Queen. The morning passed and nothing was said; the fate of Madame des Ursins then became pretty evident.

Chalais and Lanti made bold to ask the King for permission to go and join the Princess in her isolation. Not only he allowed them to do so, but charged them with a letter of simple civility, in which he told her he was very sorry for what had happened; that he had not been able to oppose the Queen's will; that he should continue to her her pensions, and see that they were punctually paid. He was as good as his word: as long as she lived she regularly received them.

The Queen arrived at Guadalaxara on the afternoon of the day before Christmas day, at the hour fixed, and as though nothing had occurred. The King received her in the same manner on the staircase, gave her his hand, and immediately led her to the chapel, where the

marriage was at once celebrated; for in Spain the custom is to marry after dinner. After that he led her to her chamber, and straightway went to bed; it was before six o'clock in the evening, and both got up again for the midnight mass. What passed between them upon the event of the previous evening was entirely unknown, and has always remained so. The day after Christmas day the King and Queen alone together in a coach, and followed by all the Court, took the road for Madrid, where there was no more talk of Madame des Ursins than if the King had never known her. Our King showed not the least surprise at the news brought to him by a courier despatched from Guadalaxara by the Duc de Saint-Aignan, though all the Court was filled with emotion and affright after having seen Madame des Ursins so triumphant.

Let us now look about for some explanations that will enable us to pierce this mystery—that remark to Torcy which escaped the King, which Torcy could not comprehend, and which he related to Castries, who told it to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, from whom I learned it! Can we imagine that a Parma princess brought up in a garret by an imperious mother, would have dared to take upon herself, while six leagues from the King of Spain whom she had never seen, a step so bold and unheard-of, when we consider against whom directed, a person possessing the entire confidence of that King and reigning openly? The thing is explained by the order, so unusual and so secret, that Amenzago had from the King of Spain to obey the Queen in everything; without reserve and without comment; an order that became known only at the moment when she gave orders to arrest Madame des Ursins and take her away.

Let us remark, too, the tranquillity with which our King and the King of Spain received the first intel-

ligence of this event; the inactivity of the latter, the coldness of his letters to Madame des Ursins, and his perfect indifference what became of a person who was so cherished the day before, and who yet was forced to travel deprived of everything, by roads full of ice and snow. We must recollect that when the King banished Madame des Ursins before, for opening the letter of the Abbé d'Estrées, and for the note she sent upon it, he did not dare to have his orders executed in the presence of the King of Spain. It was on the frontier of Portugal, where our King wished him to go for the express purpose, that the King of Spain signed the order by which the Princesse des Ursins was forced to withdraw from the country. Now we had a second edition of the same volume. Let me add what I learnt from the Maréchal de Brancas, to whom Alberoni related, a long while after this disgrace, that one evening as the Queen was travelling from Parma to Spain, he found her pacing her chamber, with rapid step and in agitation muttering to herself, letting escape the name of the Princesse des Ursins, and then saying with heat, "I will drive her away, the first thing." He cried out to the Queen and sought to represent to her the danger, the madness, the inutility of the enterprise which overwhelmed him. "Keep all this quiet," said the Queen, "and never let what you have heard escape you. Not a word! I know what I am about."

All these things together threw much light upon a catastrophe equally astonishing in itself and in its execution, and clearly show our King to have been the author of it; the King of Spain a consenting party and assisting by the extraordinary order given to Amenzago; and the Queen the actress, charged in some manner by the two Kings to bring it about. The sequel in France confirmed this opinion.

The fall of the Princesse des Ursins caused great changes in Spain. The Comtesse d'Altamire was named Camarera Mayor, in her place. She was one of the greatest ladies in all Spain, and was hereditary Duchess of Cardonne. Cellamare, nephew of Cardinal del Giudice, was named her grand écuyer; and the Cardinal himself soon returned to Madrid and to consideration. As a natural consequence, Macanas was disgraced. He and Orry had orders to leave Spain, the latter without seeing the King. He carried with him the maledictions of the public. Pompadour, who had been named Ambassador in Spain only to amuse Madame des Ursins, was dismissed, and the Duc de Saint-Aignan invested with that character, just as he was about to return after having conducted the Queen to Madrid.

In due time the Princesse des Ursins arrived in Paris, and took up her quarters in the house of the Duc de Noirmoutiers, her brother, in the Rue Saint-Dominique, close to mine. This journey must have appeared to her very different from the last she had made in France, when she was Queen of the Court. Few people, except her former friends and those of her formal cabal, came to see her; yet, nevertheless, some curious folks appeared, so that for the first few days there was company enough; but after that, solitude followed when the ill-success of her journey to Versailles became known. M. d'Orléans, reunited now with the King of Spain, felt that it was due to his interest even more than to his vengeance to show in a striking manner, that it was solely owing to the hatred and artifice of Madame des Ursins that he had fallen into such disfavour on account of Spain, and had been in danger of losing his head. Times had changed. Monseigneur was dead, the Meudon cabal annihilated; Madame de Maintenon had turned her

back upon Madame des Ursins; thus M. d'Orléans was free to act as he pleased. Incited by Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, and more still by Madame, he begged the King to prohibit Madame des Ursins from appearing anywhere (Versailles not even excepted) where she might meet Madame la Duchesse de Berry, Madame, Monsieur le Duc, and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, who at the same time strictly forbade their households to see her, and asked the persons to whom they were particularly attached to hold no intercourse with her. This made a great stir, openly showed that Madame des Ursins had utterly lost the support of Madame de Maintenon and the King, and much embarrassed her.

I could not feel that M. d'Orléans was acting wrong, in thus paying off his wrongs for the injuries she had heaped upon him, but I represented to him, that as I had always been an intimate friend of Madame des Ursins, putting aside her conduct towards him and making no comparison between my attachment for him and my friendship for her, I could not forget the marks of consideration she had always given me, particularly in her last triumphant journey (as I have already explained), and that it would be hard if I could not see her. We capitulated then, and M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans permitted me to see her twice—once immediately; once when she left—giving my word that I would not see her three times, and that Madame de Saint-Simon should not see her at all; which latter clause we agreed to very unwillingly, but there was no remedy. As I wished at least to profit by my chance, I sent word to Madame des Ursins, explaining the fetters that bound me, and saying that as I wished to see her at all events at my ease since I should see her so little, I would let pass the first few days and her first journey to Court, before asking her for an audience.

My message was very well received; she had known for many years the terms on which I was with M. d'Orléans; she was not surprised with these fetters, and was grateful to me for what I had obtained. Some days after she had been to Versailles, I went to her at two o'clock in the day. She at once closed the door to all comers, and I was *tête-à-tête* with her until ten o'clock at night.

It may be imagined what a number of things were passed in review during this long discourse. Our eight hours of conversation appeared to me like eight moments. She related to me her catastrophe, without mixing up the King or the King of Spain, of whom she spoke well; but, without violently attacking the Queen, she predicted what since has occurred. We separated at supper time, with a thousand reciprocal protestations and regret that Madame de Saint-Simon could not see her. She promised to inform me of her departure early enough to allow us to pass another day together.

Her journey to Versailles did not pass off very pleasantly. She dined with the Duchesse de Luders, and then visited Madame de Maintenon; waited with her for the King, but when he came did not stop long, withdrawing to Madame Adam's, where she passed the night. The next day she dined with the Duchesse de Ventadour, and returned to Paris. She was allowed to give up the pension she received from the King, and in exchange to have her Hôtel de Ville stock increased, so that it yielded forty thousand livres a-year. Her income, besides being doubled, was thus much more sure than would have been a pension from the King, which she doubted not M. d'Orléans, as soon as he became master, would take from her. She thought of retiring into Holland, but the States-General would have nothing to do with her, either at the Hague, or

at Amsterdam. She had reckoned upon the Hague. She next thought of Utrecht, but was soon out of conceit with it, and turned her regards towards Italy.

The health of the King, meanwhile, visibly declining, Madame des Ursins feared lest she should entirely fall into the clutches of M. d'Orléans. She fully resolved, therefore, to make off, without knowing, however, where to fix herself; and asked permission of the King to come and take leave of him at Marly. She came there from Paris on Tuesday, the 6th of August, so as to arrive as he left dinner, that is, about ten o'clock. She was immediately admitted into the cabinet of the King, with whom she remained *tête-à-tête* full half an hour. She passed immediately to the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, with whom she remained an hour; and then got into her coach and returned to Paris. I only knew of this leave-taking by her arrival at Marly, where I had some trouble in meeting her. As chance would have it, I went in search of her coach to ask her people what had become of her, and was speaking to them when, lo and behold! she herself arrived. She seemed very glad to see me, and made me mount with her into her coach, where for little less than an hour we discoursed very freely. She did not dissimulate from me her fears; the coldness the King and Madame de Maintenon had testified for her through all their politeness; the isolation she found herself in at the Court, even in Paris; and the uncertainty in which she was as to the choice of a retreat; all this in detail, and nevertheless without complaint, without regret, without weakness; always reassured and superior to events, as though some one else were in question. She touched lightly upon Spain, upon the ascendency the Queen was acquiring already over the King, giving me to understand that it could not be otherwise; running

lightly and modestly over the Queen, and always praising the goodness of the King of Spain. Fear, on account of the passers-by, put an end to our conversation. She was very gracious to me; expressed regret that we must part; proceeded to tell me when she should start in time for us to have another day together; sent many compliments to Madame de Saint-Simon; and declared herself sensible of the mark of friendship I had given her, in spite of my engagement with M. d'Orléans. As soon as I had seen her off, I went to M. d'Orléans, to whom I related what I had just done; said I had not paid a visit, but had had simply a meeting; that it was true I could not hinder myself from seeking it, without prejudice to the final visit he had allowed me. Neither he nor Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans complained. They had fully triumphed over their enemy, and were on the point of seeing her leave France for ever, without hope in Spain.

Until now, Madame des Ursins amused by a residue of friends, increased by those of M. de Noirmoutiers with whom she lodged and who had money, had gently occupied herself with the arrangement of her affairs, changed as they were, and in withdrawing her effects from Spain. The fear lest she should find herself in the power of a Prince whom she had so cruelly offended, and who showed, since her arrival in France, that he felt it, hurried all her measures. Her terror augmented by the change in the King that she found at this last audience had taken place since her first. She no longer doubted that his end was very near; and all her attention was directed to the means by which she might anticipate it, and be well informed of his health; this she believed her sole security in France. Terrified anew by the accounts she received of it, she no longer gave herself time for anything, but precipi-

tately set out on the 14th August, accompanied as far as Essonne by her two nephews. She had no time to inform me, so that I have never seen her since the day of our conversation at Marly in her coach. She did not breathe until she arrived at Lyons.

She had abandoned the project of retiring into Holland, where the States-General would not have her. She herself, too, was disgusted with the equality of a republic, which counterbalanced in her mind the pleasure of the liberty enjoyed there. But she could not resolve to return to Rome, the theatre of her former reign, and appear there proscribed and old, as in an asylum. She feared, too, a bad reception, remembering the quarrels that had taken place between the Courts of Rome and Spain. She had lost many friends and acquaintances; in fifteen years of absence all had passed away, and she felt the trouble she might be subjected to by the ministers of the Emperor, and by those of the two Crowns, with their partisans. Turin was not a Court worthy of her; the King of Sardinia had not always been pleased with her, and they knew too much for each other. At Venice she would have been out of her element.

Whilst agitated in this manner, without being able to make up her mind, she learned that the King was in extreme danger, a danger exaggerated by rumour. Fear seized her lest he should die whilst she was in his realm. She set off immediately, therefore, without knowing where to go; and solely to leave France went to Chambéry, as the nearest place of safety, arriving there out of breath, so to say.

Every place being well examined, she preferred Genoa; its liberty pleased her; there was intercourse there with a rich and numerous nobility; the climate and the city were beautiful; the place was in some sort a centre and halting-point between Madrid, Paris,

and Rome, with which places she was always in communication, and always hungered after all that passed there. Genoa determined on, she went there. She was well received, hoped to fix her tabernacle there, and indeed stayed some years. But at last *ennui* seized her; perhaps vexation at not being made enough of. She could not exist without meddling, and what is there for a superannuated woman to meddle with at Genoa? She turned her thoughts, therefore, towards Rome. Then, on sounding, found her course clear, quitted Genoa, and returned to her nest.

She was not long there before she attached herself to the King and Queen of England (the Pretender and his wife), and soon governed them openly. What a poor resource! But it was courtly and had a flavour of occupation for a woman who could not exist without movement. She finished her life there remarkably healthy in mind and body, and in a prodigious opulence, which was not without its use in that deplorable Court. For the rest, Madame des Ursins was in mediocre estimation at Rome, was deserted by the Spanish, little visited by the French, but always faithfully paid by France and Spain, and unmolested by the Regent. She was always occupied with the world, and with what she had been, but was no longer; yet without meanness, nay, with courage and dignity.

The loss she experienced in January, 1720, of the Cardinal de la Trémoille, although there was no real friendship between them, did not fail to create a void in her. She survived him three years, preserved all her health, her strength, her mind until death, and was carried off, more than eighty years of age, at Rome, on the 5th of December, 1722, after a very short illness.

She had the pleasure of seeing Madame de Maintenon forgotten and annihilated in Saint-Cyr, of surviving her, of seeing at Rome her two enemies, Giudice

and Alberoni, as profoundly disgraced as she,—one falling from the same height,—and of relishing the forgetfulness, not to say contempt, into which they both sank. Her death, which, a few years before, would have resounded throughout all Europe, made not the least sensation. The little English Court regretted her, and some private friends also, of whom I was one. I did not hide this, although, on account of M. le Duc d'Orléans, I had kept up no intercourse with her; for the rest, nobody seemed to perceive she had disappeared. She was, nevertheless, so extraordinary a person, during all the course of her long life, everywhere, and had so grandly figured, although in various ways; had such rare intellect, courage, industry, and resources; reigned so publicly and so absolutely in Spain; and had a character so sustained and so unique, that her life deserves to be written, and would take a place among the most curious fragments of the history of the times in which she lived.

CHAPTER LXVI

BUT I must return somewhat now, in order to make way for a crowd of events which have been pressing forward all this time, but which I have passed by, in going straightforward at once to the end of Madame des Ursins' history.

On Monday, the 30th April, 1714, the King took medicine, and worked after dinner with Pontchartrain. This was at Marly. About six o'clock, he went to M. le Duc de Berry, who had had fever all night. M. le Duc de Berry had risen without saying anything, had been with the King at the medicine-hour, and intended to go stag-hunting; but on leaving the King's chamber shivering seized him, and forced him to go back again. He was bled while the King was in his chamber, and the blood was found very bad; when the King went to bed the doctors told him the illness was of a nature to make them hope that it might be a case of contagion. M. le Duc de Berry had vomited a good deal—a black vomit. Fagon said, confidently, that it was from the blood; the other doctors fastened upon some chocolate he had taken on the Sunday. From this day forward I knew what was the matter. Boulduc, apothecary of the King, and extremely attached to Madame de Saint-Simon and to me, whispered in my ear that M. le Duc de Berry would not recover, and that, with some little difference, his malady was the same as that of which the Dauphin and Dauphine died. He repeated this the next day, and never once varied afterwards; saying to me on the third day, that none of the doctors who attended the Prince were of a different opinion, or hid from him what they thought.

On Tuesday, the 1st of May, the Prince was bled in the foot at seven o'clock in the morning, after a very bad night; took emetics twice, which had a good effect; then some manna; but still there were two accesses. The King went to the sick-room afterwards, held a finance council, would not go shooting, as he had arranged, but walked in his gardens. The doctors, contrary to their custom, never reassured him. The night was cruel. On Wednesday, the 2nd of May, the King went, after mass, to M. le Duc de Berry, who had been again bled in the foot. The King held the Council of State, as usual, dined in Madame de Maintenon's rooms, and afterwards reviewed his Guards. Coettenfao, chevalier d'honneur of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, came during the morning to beg the King, in her name, that Chirac, a famous doctor of M. d'Orléans, should be allowed to see M. le Duc de Berry. The King refused, on the ground that all the other doctors were in accord, and that Chirac, who might differ with them, would embarrass them. After dinner Mesdames de Pompadour and La Vieuville arrived, on the part of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, to beg the King that she might be allowed to come and see her husband, saying that she would come on foot rather than stay away. It would have been better, surely, for her to come in a coach, if she so much wished, and, before alighting, to send to the King for permission so to do. But the fact is, she had no more desire to come than M. de Berry had to see her. He never once mentioned her name, or spoke of her, even indirectly. The King replied to those ladies by saying that he would not close the door against Madame la Duchesse de Berry, but, considering the state she was in, he thought it would be very imprudent on her part to come. He afterwards told M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans to go to Versailles and hinder

her from coming. Upon returning from the review the King went again to see M. le Duc de Berry. He had been once more bled in the arm, had vomited all day—much blood too—and had taken some Robel water three times, in order to stop his sickness. This vomiting put off the communion. Père de la Rue had been by his side ever since Tuesday morning, and found him very patient and resigned.

On Thursday, the 3rd, after a night worse than ever, the doctors said they did not doubt that a vein had been broken in the stomach. It was reported that this accident had happened by an effort M. de Berry made when out hunting on the previous Thursday, the day the Elector of Bavaria arrived. His horse slipped; in drawing the animal up, his body struck against the pommel of the saddle, so it was said, and ever since he had spit blood every day. The vomiting ceased at nine o'clock in the morning, but the patient was no better. The King, who was going stag-hunting, put it off. At six o'clock at night M. de Berry was so choked that he could no longer remain in bed; about eight o'clock he found himself so relieved that he said to Madame, he hoped he should not die; but soon after, the malady increased so much that Père de la Rue said it was no longer time to think of anything but God, and of receiving the sacrament. The poor Prince himself seemed to desire it.

A little after ten o'clock at night the King went to the chapel, where a consecrated Host had been kept prepared ever since the commencement of the illness. M. le Duc de Berry received it, with extreme unction, in presence of the King, with much devotion and respect. The King remained nearly an hour in the chamber, supped alone in his own, did not receive the Princesses afterwards, but went to bed. M. le Duc d'Orléans, at ten o'clock in the morning, went again

to Versailles, as Madame la Duchesse de Berry wished still to come to Marly. M. le Duc de Berry related to Père de la Rue, who at least said so, the accident just spoken of; but, it was added, "his head was then beginning to wander." After losing the power of speech, he took the crucifix Père de la Rue held, kissed it, and placed it upon his heart. He expired on Friday, the 4th of May, 1714, at four o'clock in the morning, in his twenty-eighth year, having been born at Versailles, the last day of August, 1686.

M. le Duc de Berry was of ordinary height, rather fat, of a beautiful blonde complexion, with a fresh, handsome face, indicating excellent health. He was made for society, and for pleasure, which he loved; the best, gentlest, most compassionate and accessible of men, without pride, and without vanity, but not without dignity or self-appreciation. He was of medium intellect, without ambition or desire, but had very good sense, and was capable of listening, of understanding, and of always taking the right side in preference to the wrong, however speciously put. He loved truth, justice, and reason; all that was contrary to religion pained him to excess, although he was not of marked piety. He was not without firmness, and hated constraint. This caused it to be feared that he was not supple enough for a younger son, and, indeed, in his early youth he could not understand that there was any difference between him and his eldest brother, and his boyish quarrels often caused alarm.

He was the most gay, the most frank, and consequently the most loved of the three brothers; in his youth nothing was spoken of but his smart replies to Madame and M. de la Rochefoucauld. He laughed at preceptors and at masters—often at punishment. He scarcely knew anything except how to read and write; and learned nothing after being freed from the neces-

sity of learning. This ignorance so intimidated him, that he could scarcely open his mouth before strangers, or perform the most ordinary duties of his rank; he had persuaded himself that he was an ass and a fool, fit for nothing. He was so afraid of the King that he dared not approach him, and was so confused if the King looked hard at him, or spoke of other things than hunting, or gaming, that he scarcely understood a word, or could collect his thoughts. As may be imagined, such fear does not go hand in hand with deep affection.

He commenced life with Madame la Duchesse de Berry as do almost all those who marry very young and green. He became extremely amorous of her; this, joined to his gentleness and natural complaisance, had the usual effect, which was to thoroughly spoil her. He was not long in perceiving it; but love was too strong for him. He found a woman proud, haughty, passionate, incapable of forgiveness, who despised him, and who allowed him to see it, because he had infinitely less head than she; and because, moreover, she was supremely false and strongly determined. She piqued herself upon both these qualities, and on her contempt for religion, ridiculing M. le Duc de Berry for being devout; and all these things became insupportable to him. Her gallantries were so prompt, so rapid, so unmeasured, that he could not help seeing them. Her endless private interviews with M. le Duc d'Orléans, in which everything languished if he was present, made him furious. Violent scenes frequently took place between them; the last, which occurred at Rambouillet, went so far that Madame la Duchesse de Berry received a kick * * * * , and a menace that she should be shut up in a convent for the rest of her life; and when M. le Duc de Berry fell ill, he was thumbing his hat, like a child, before the King, relating

all his grievances, and asking to be delivered from Madame la Duchesse de Berry. Hitherto I have only alluded to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, but, as will be seen, she became so singular a person when her father was Regent, that I will here make her known more completely than I have yet done.

She was tall, handsome, well made, with, however, but little grace, and had something in her eyes which made you fear what she was. Like her father and mother, she spoke well and with facility. Timid in trifles, yet in other things terrifyingly bold,—foolishly haughty sometimes, and sometimes mean to the lowest degree,—it may be said that she was a model of all the vices, avarice excepted; and was all the more dangerous because she had art and talent. I am not accustomed to over-colour the picture I am obliged to present to render things understood, and it will easily be perceived how strictly I am reserved upon the ladies, and upon all gallantries, not intimately associated with what may be called important matters. I should be so here, more than in any other case, from self-love, if not from respect for the sex and dignity of the person. The considerable part I played in bringing about Madame la Duchesse de Berry's marriage, and the place that Madame de Saint-Simon, in spite of herself and of me, occupied in connection with her, would be for me reasons more than enough for silence, if I did not feel that silence would throw obscurity over all the sequel of this history. It is then to the truth that I sacrifice my self-love, and with the same truthfulness I will say that if I had known or merely suspected, that the Princess was so bad as she showed herself directly after her marriage, and always more and more since, she would never have become Duchesse de Berry.

I have already told how she annoyed M. le Duc de

Berry by ridiculing his devotion. In other ways she put his patience to severe trials, and more than once was in danger of public exposure. She partook of few meals in private, at which she did not get so drunk as to lose consciousness, and to bring up all she had taken on every side. The presence of M. le Duc de Berry, of M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, of ladies with whom she was not on familiar terms, in no way restrained her. She complained even of M. le Duc de Berry for not doing as she did. She often treated her father with a haughtiness which was terrifying on all accounts.

In her gallantries she was as unrestrained as in other things. After having had several favourites, she fixed herself upon La Haye, who from King's page had become private écuyer of M. le Duc de Berry. The oglings in the Salon of Marly were perceived by everybody; nothing restrained them. At last, it must be said, for this fact encloses all the rest, she wished La Haye to run away with her from Versailles to the Low Countries, whilst M. le Duc de Berry and the King were both living. La Haye almost died with fright at this proposition, which she herself made to him. His refusal made her furious. From the most pressing entreaties she came to all the invectives that rage could suggest, and that torrents of tears allowed her to pronounce. La Haye had to suffer her attacks—now tender, now furious; he was in the most mortal embarrassment. It was a long time before she could be cured of her mad idea, and in the meanwhile she subjected the poor fellow to the most frightful persecution. Her passion for La Haye continued until the death of M. le Duc de Berry, and some time after.

M. le Duc de Berry was buried at Saint-Denis on Wednesday, the 16th of May; M. le Duc d'Orléans was to have headed the procession, but the same odious

reports against him that had circulated at the death of the Dauphin had again appeared, and he begged to be let off. M. le Duc filled his place. Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who was in the family way, kept her bed; and in order that she should not be seen there when people came to pay her the usual visits of condolence, the room was kept quite dark. Many ridiculous scenes and much indecent laughter, that could not be restrained, thus arose. Persons accustomed to the room could see their way, but those unaccustomed stumbled at every step, and had need of guidance. For want of this, Père du Trevoux, and Père Tellier after him, both addressed their compliments to the wall; others to the foot of the bed. This became a secret amusement, but happily did not last long.

As may be imagined, the death of M. le Duc de Berry was a deliverance for Madame la Duchesse de Berry. She was, as I have said, in the family way; she hoped for a boy, and counted upon enjoying as a widow more liberty than she had been able to take as a wife. She had a miscarriage, however, on Saturday, the 16th of June, and was delivered of a daughter which lived only twelve hours. The little corpse was buried at Saint-Denis, Madame de Saint-Simon at the head of the procession. Madame la Duchesse de Berry, shortly before this event, received two hundred thousand livres income of pension; but the establishment she would have had if the child had been a boy was not allowed her.

CHAPTER LXVII

IT is time now that I should say something about an event that caused an immense stir throughout the land, and was much talked of even in foreign parts. I must first introduce, however, a sort of a personage whose intimacy was forced upon me at this period; for the two incidents are in a certain degree associated together.

M. d'Orléans for some little time had continually represented to me, how desirous one of his acquaintances was to secure my friendship. This acquaintance was Maisons, president in the parliament, grandson of that superintendent of the finances who built the superb château of Maisons, and son of the man who had presided so unworthily at the judgment of our trial with M. de Luxembourg, which I have related in its place. Maisons was a person of much ambition, exceedingly anxious to make a name, gracious and flattering in manners to gain his ends, and amazingly fond of grand society.

The position of Maisons, where he lived, close to Marly, afforded him many opportunities of drawing there the principal people of the Court. It became quite the fashion to go from Marly to his château. The King grew accustomed to hear the place spoken of, and was in no way displeased. Maisons had managed to become very intimate with M. le Duc and M. le Prince de Conti. These two princes being dead, he turned his thoughts towards M. d'Orléans. He addressed himself to Canillac, who had always been an intimate friend of M. d'Orléans, and by him soon

gained the intimacy of that prince. But he was not yet satisfied. He wished to circumvent M. d'Orléans more completely than he could by means of Canillac. He cast his eye, therefore, upon me. I think he was afraid of me on account of what I have related concerning his father. He had an only son about the same age as my children. For a long time he had made all kinds of advances, and visited them often. The son's intimacy did not, however, assist the father; so that at last Maisons made M. le Duc d'Orléans speak to me himself.

I was cold; tried to get out of the matter with compliments and excuses. M. d'Orléans, who believed he had found a treasure in his new acquaintance, returned to the charge; but I was not more docile. A few days after, I was surprised by an attack of the same kind from M. de Beauvilliers. How or when he had formed an intimacy with Maisons, I have never been able to unravel; but formed it, he had; and he importuned me so much, nay exerted his authority over me, that at last I found I must give way. Not to offend M. d'Orléans by yielding to another after having refused to yield to him, I waited until he should again speak to me on the subject, so that he might give himself the credit of vanquishing me. I did not wait long. The Prince attacked me anew, maintained that nothing would be more useful to him than an intimacy between myself and Maisons, who scarcely dared to see him, except in secret, and with whom he had not the same leisure or liberty for discussing many things that might present themselves. I had replied to all this before; but as I had resolved to surrender to the Prince (after the authority of the Duc de Beauvilliers had vanquished me), I complied with his wish.

Maisons was soon informed of it, and did not let my resolution grow cold. M. le Duc d'Orléans urged me

to go and sleep a night in Paris. Upon arriving there, I found a note from Maisons, who had already sent an ocean of compliments to me by the Prince and the Duke. This note, for reasons to be told me afterwards, appointed a meeting at eleven o'clock this night, in the plain behind the Invalides, in a very mysterious manner. I went there with an old coachman of my mother's and a lackey to put my people off the scent. There was a little moonlight. Maisons in a small carriage awaited me. We soon met. He mounted into my coach. I never could comprehend the mystery of this meeting. There was nothing on his part but advances, compliments, protestations, allusions to the former interview of our fathers; only such things, in fact, as a man of cleverness and breeding says when he wishes to form a close intimacy with any one. Not a word that he said was of importance or of a private nature.

I replied in the civillest manner possible to the abundance he bestowed upon me. I expected afterwards something that would justify the hour, the place, the mystery, in a word, of our interview. What was my surprise to hear no syllable upon these points. The only reason Maisons gave for our secret interview was that from that time he should be able to come and see me at Versailles with less inconvenience, and gradually increase the number and the length of his visits until people grew accustomed to see him there! He then begged me not to visit him in Paris, because his house was always too full of people. This interview lasted little less than half an hour. It was long indeed, considering what passed. We separated with much politeness, and the first time he went to Versailles he called upon me towards the middle of the day.

In a short time he visited me every Sunday. Our conversation by degrees became more serious. I did

not fail to be on my guard, but drew him out upon various subjects; he being very willing.

We were on this footing when, returning to my room at Marly about midday on Sunday, the 29th of July, I found a lackey of Maisons with a note from him, in which he conjured me to quit all business and come immediately to his house at Paris, where he would wait for me alone, and where I should find that something was in question, that could not suffer the slightest delay, that could not even be named in writing, and which was of the most extreme importance. This lackey had long since arrived, and had sent my people everywhere in search of me. I was engaged that day to dine with M. and Madame de Lauzun. To have broken my engagement would have been to set the curiosity and the malignity of M. de Lauzun at work. I dared not disappear; therefore I gave orders to my coachman, and as soon as I had dined I vanished. Nobody saw me get into my chaise; and I quickly arrived at Paris, and immediately hastened to Maisons' with eagerness easy to imagine.

I found him alone with the Duc de Noailles. At the first glance I saw two dismayed men, who said to me in an exhausted manner, but after a heated though short preface, that the King had declared his two bastards and their male posterity to all eternity, real princes of the blood, with full liberty to assume all their dignities, honours, and rank, and capacity to succeed to the throne in default of the others.

At this news, which I did not expect, and the secret of which had hitherto been preserved, without a particle of it transpiring, my arms fell. I lowered my head and remained profoundly silent, absorbed in my reflections. They were soon disturbed by cries which aroused me. These two men commenced pacing the chamber; stamped with their feet; pushed and struck

the furniture; raged as though each wished to be louder than the other, and made the house echo with their noise. I avow that so much hubbub seemed suspicious to me on the part of two men, one so sage and so measured, and to whom this rank was of no consequence; the other always so tranquil, so crafty, so master of himself. I knew not why this sudden fury succeeded to such dejected oppression; and I was not without suspicion that their passion was put on merely to excite mine. If this was their design, it succeeded ill. I remained in my chair, and coldly asked them what was the matter. My tranquillity sharpened their fury. Never in my life have I seen anything so surprising.

I asked them if they had gone mad, and if instead of this tempest it would not be better to reason, and see whether something could not be done. They declared it was precisely because nothing could be done against a thing not only resolved on, but executed, declared, and sent to the Parliament, that they were so furious; that M. le Duc d'Orléans, on the terms he was with the King, would not dare even to whisper objections; that the Princes of the blood, mere children as they were, could only tremble; that the Dukes had no means of opposition, and that the Parliament was reduced to silence and slavery. Thereupon they set to work to see who could cry the louder and reviled again, sparing neither things nor persons.

I, also, was in anger, but this racket kept me cool and made me smile. I argued with them and said, that after all I preferred to see the bastards princes of the blood, capable of succeeding to the throne, than to see them in the intermediary rank they occupied. And it is true that as soon as I had cooled myself, I felt thus.

At last the storm grew calm, and they told me that

the Chief-President and the Attorney-General—who, I knew, had been at Marly very early in the morning at the Chancellor's—had seen the King in his cabinet soon after he rose, and had brought back the declaration, all prepared. Maisons must, however, have known this earlier; because when the lackey he sent to me set out from Paris, those gentlemen could not have returned there. Our talk led to nothing, and I regained Marly in all haste, in order that my absence might not be remarked.

Nevertheless it was towards the King's supper hour when I arrived. I went straight to the salon, and found it very dejected. People looked, but scarcely dared to approach each other; at the most, a sign or a whisper in the ear, as the courtiers brushed by one another, was ventured on. I saw the King sit down to table; he seemed to me more haughty than usual, and continually looked all around. The news had only been known one hour; everybody was still congealed and upon his guard.

As soon as the King was seated (he had looked very hard at me in passing) I went straight to M. du Maine's. Although the hour was unusual, the doors fell before me; I saw a man, who received me with joyful surprise, and who, as it were, moved through the air towards me, all lame that he was. I said that I came to offer him a sincere compliment, that we (the Dukes) claimed no precedence over the Princes of the blood; but what we claimed was, that there should be nobody between the Princes of the blood and us; that as this intermediary rank no longer existed, we had nothing more to say, but to rejoice that we had no longer to support what was insupportable. The joy of M. du Maine burst forth at my compliments, and he startled me with a politeness inspired by the transport of triumph.

But if he was delighted at the declaration of the King, it was far otherwise with the world. Foreign dukes and princes fumed, but uselessly. The Court uttered dull murmurs more than could have been expected. Paris and the provinces broke out; the Parliament did not keep silent. Madame de Maintenon, delighted with her work, received the adoration of her familiars.

As for me, I will content myself with but few reflections upon this most monstrous, astounding, and frightful determination of the King. I will simply say, that it is impossible not to see in it an attack upon the Crown; contempt for the entire nation, whose rights are trodden under foot by it; insult to all the Princes of the blood; in fact the crime of high treason in its most rash and most criminal extent. Yes! however venerable God may have rendered in the eyes of men the majesty of Kings and their sacred persons, which are his anointed; however execrable may be the crime known as high treason, of attempting their lives; however terrible and singular may be the punishments justly invented to prevent that crime, and to remove by their horror the most infamous from the infernal resolution of committing it,—we cannot help finding in the crime in question a plenitude not in the other, however abominable it may be. Yes! to overthrow the most holy laws, that have existed ever since the establishment of monarchy; to extinguish a right the most sacred—the most important—the most inherent in the nation: to make succession to the throne, purely, supremely, and despotically arbitrary; in a word, to make of a bastard a crown prince,—is a crime more black, more vast, more terrible, than that of high treason against the chief of the State.

CHAPTER LXVIII

BUT let me now explain by what means the King was induced to arrive at, and publish this terrible determination.

He was growing old, and though no external change in him was visible, those near him had for some time begun to fear that he could not live long. This is not the place to descant upon a health hitherto so good and so even: suffice it to mention, that it silently began to give way. Overwhelmed by the most violent reverses of fortune after being so long accustomed to success, the King was even more overwhelmed by domestic misfortunes. All his children had disappeared before him, and left him abandoned to the most fatal reflections. At every moment he himself expected the same kind of death. Instead of finding relief from his anguish among those who surrounded him, and whom he saw most frequently, he met with nothing but fresh trouble there. Excepting Maréchal, his chief surgeon, who laboured unceasingly to cure him of his suspicions, Madame de Maintenon, M. du Maine, Fagon, Bloin, the other principal valets sold to the bastard and his former governors,—all sought to augment these suspicions; and in truth it was not difficult to do so. Nobody doubted that poison had been used, nobody could seriously doubt it; and Maréchal, who was as persuaded as the rest, held a different opinion before the King only to deliver him from a useless torment which could not but do him injury. But M. du Maine, and Madame de Maintenon also, had too much interest to maintain him in this fear, and by their

art filled him with horror against M. d'Orléans, whom they named as the author of these crimes, so that the King with this prince before his eyes every day, was in a perpetual state of alarm.

With his children the King had lost, and by the same way, a princess, who in addition to being the soul and ornament of his court, was, moreover, all his amusement, all his joy, all his affection, in the hours when he was not in public. Never, since he entered the world, had he become really familiar with any one but her; it has been seen elsewhere to what extent. Nothing could fill up this great void: The bitterness of being deprived of her augmented, because he could find no diversion. This unfortunate state made him seek relief everywhere in abandoning himself more and more to Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine.

They soon managed to obtain possession of him, as it were, entirely; leaving no art unexhausted in order to flatter, to amuse, to please, and to interest him. He was made to believe that M. du Maine was utterly without ambition; like a good father of a family, solely occupied with his children, touched with the grandeur of his nearness to the King, simple, frank, upright, and one who after working at his duties all day, and after giving himself time for prayer and piety, amused himself in hunting, and drew upon his natural gaiety and cheerfulness, without knowing anything of the Court, or of what was passing! Compare this portrait with his real character, and we shall feel with terror what a rattlesnake was introduced into the King's privacy.

Established thus in the mind and heart of the King, the opportunity seemed ripe for profiting by precious time that could not last long. Everybody smiled upon the project of M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon. They had rendered M. d'Orléans odious in the

eyes of the King and of the whole country, by the most execrable calumnies. How could he defend himself? shut up as the King was, how oppose them? how interfere with their dark designs? M. du Maine wished not only to be made prince of the blood, but to be made guardian of the heir to the throne, so as to dwarf the power of the Regent as much as possible. He flattered himself that the feeling he had excited against M. d'Orléans in the Court, in Paris, and in the provinces would be powerfully strengthened by dispositions so dishonourable; that he should find himself received as the guardian and protector of the life of the royal infant, to whom was attached the salvation of France, of which he would then become the idol; that the independent possession of the young King, and of his military and civil households, would strengthen with the public applause the power with which he would be invested in the state by this testament; that the Regent, reviled and stripped in this manner, not only would be in no condition to dispute anything, but would be unable to defend himself from any attempts the bastard might afterwards make against him. M. du Maine wished in fact to take from M. d'Orléans everything, except the name of Regent, and to divide all the power between himself and his brother. Such was his scheme, that the King by incredible art was induced to sanction and approve.

But the schemers had tough work before they obtained this success. They found that the King would not consent to their wishes without much opposition. They hit upon a devilish plan to overpower his resistance. Hitherto, they had only been occupied in pleasing him, in amusing him, in anticipating his wishes, in praising him—let me say the word—in adoring him. They had redoubled their attention, since, by the Dauphine's death, they had become his sole resource.

Not being able now to lead him as they wished, but determined to do so at all cost, they adopted another system, certain as they were that they could do so with impunity. Both became serious, oftentimes dejected, silent, furnishing nothing to the conversation, letting pass what the King forced himself to say, sometimes not even replying, if it was not a direct interrogation. In this manner all the leisure hours of the King were rendered dull and empty; his amusements and diversions were made fatiguing and sad and a weight was cast upon him, which he was the more unable to bear because it was quite new to him, and he was utterly without means to remove it. The few ladies who were admitted to the intimacy of the King knew not what to make of the change they saw in Madame de Maintenon. They were duped at first by the plea of illness; but seeing at last that its duration passed all bounds, that it had no intermission, that her face announced no malady, that her daily life was in no way deranged, that the King became as serious and as sad as she, they sounded each other to find out the cause. Fear, lest it should be something in which they, unknowingly, were concerned, troubled them; so that they became even worse company to the King than Madame de Maintenon.

There was no relief for the King. All his resource was in the commonplace talk of the Comte de Toulouse, who was not amusing, although ignorant of the plot, and the stories of his valets, who lost tongue as soon as they perceived that they were not seconded by the Duc du Maine in his usual manner. Maréchal and all the rest, astonished at the mysterious dejection of the Duc du Maine, looked at each other without being able to divine the cause. They saw that the King was sad and bored; they trembled for his health, but not one of them dared to do anything. Time ran on, and

Sturdy beggars, female and male, and a quantity of public creatures were carried off.
—p. 1175

From the painting by C. E. Delort.

the dejection of M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon increased. This is as far as the most instructed have ever been able to penetrate. To describe the interior scenes that doubtless passed during the long time this state of things lasted, would be to write romance. Truth demands that we should relate what we know, and admit what we are ignorant of. I cannot go farther, therefore, or pierce deeper into the density of these dark mysteries.

What is certain is, that cheerfulness came back all at once, with the same surprise to the witnesses of it, as the long-continued dejection had caused them, simply because they understood no more of the end than of the commencement. The double knowledge did not come to them until they heard the frightful crash of the thunderbolt which fell upon France, and astonished all Europe.

To give some idea of the opposition from the King, M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon had to overcome, and to show how reluctantly he consented to their wishes, more than one incident may be brought forward. Some days before the news transpired, the King, full of the enormity of what he had just done for his bastards, looked at them in his cabinet, in presence of the valets, and of D'Antin and D'O, and in a sharp manner, that told of vexation, and with a severe glance, suddenly thus addressed himself to M. du Maine: "You have wished it; but know that however great I may make you, and you may be in my lifetime, you are nothing after me; and it will be for you then to avail yourself of what I have done for you, if you can."

Everybody present trembled at a thunder-clap so sudden, so little expected, so entirely removed from the character and custom of the King, and which showed so clearly the extreme ambition of the Duc du Maine, and the violence he had done to the weakness of

the King, who seemed to reproach himself for it, and to reproach the bastard for his ambition and tyranny. The consternation of M. du Maine seemed extreme at this rough sally, which no previous remark had led to. The King had made a clean breast of it. Everybody fixed his eyes upon the floor and held his breath. The silence was profound for a considerable time: it finished only when the King passed into his wardrobe. In his absence everybody breathed again. The King's heart was full to bursting with what he had just been made to do; but like a woman who gives birth to two children, he had at present brought but one into the world, and bore a second of which he must be delivered, and of which he felt all the pangs without any relief from the suffering the first had caused him.

Again, on Sunday, the 27th August, the Chief-President and the Attorney-General were sent for by the King. He was at Versailles. As soon as they were alone with him, he took from a drawer, which he unlocked, a large and thick packet, sealed with seven seals (I know not if by this M. du Maine wished to imitate the mysterious book with Seven Seals, of the Apocalypse, and so sanctify the packet). In handing it to them, the King said: "Gentlemen, this is my will. No one but myself knows its contents. I commit it to you to keep in the Parliament, to which I cannot give a greater testimony of my esteem and confidence than by rendering it the depository of it. The example of the Kings my predecessors, and that of the will of the King, my father, do not allow me to be ignorant of what may become of this; but they would have it; they have tormented me; they have left me no repose, whatever I might say. Very well! I have bought my repose. Here is the will; take it away: come what may of it, at least, I shall have rest, and shall hear no more about it."

At this last word, that he finished with a dry nod, he turned his back upon them, passed into another cabinet, and left them both nearly turned into statues. They looked at each other frozen by what they had just heard, and still more by what they had just seen in the eyes and the countenance of the King; and as soon as they had collected their senses, they retired, and went to Paris. It was not known until after dinner that the King had made a will and given it to them. In proportion as the news spread, consternation filled the Court, while the flatterers, at bottom as much alarmed as the rest, and as Paris was afterwards, exhausted themselves in praises and eulogies.

The next day, Monday, the 28th, the Queen of England came from Chaillot, where she almost always was, to Madame de Maintenon's. As soon as the King perceived her, "Madame," said he to her, like a man full of something and angry, "I have made my will; I have been tormented to do it;" then casting his eyes upon Madame de Maintenon, "I have bought repose; I know the powerlessness and inutility of it. We can do all we wish while we live; afterwards we are less than the meanest. You have only to see what became of my father's will immediately after his death, and the wills of so many other Kings. I know it well; but nevertheless they have wished it; they gave me no rest nor repose, no calm until it was done; ah, well! then, Madame, it is done; come what may of it, I shall be no longer tormented."

Words such as these so expressive of the extreme violence suffered by the King, of his long and obstinate battle before surrendering, of his vexation, and uneasiness, demand the clearest proofs. I had them from people who heard them, and would not advance them unless I were perfectly persuaded of their exactness.

As soon as the Chief-President and the Attorney-General returned to Paris, they sent for some workmen, whom they led into a tower of the Palace of Justice, behind the Buvette, or drinking-place of the grand chamber and the cabinet of the Chief-President. They had a big hole made in the wall of this tower, which is very thick, deposited the testament there, closed up the opening with an iron door, put an iron grating by way of second door, and then walled all up together. The door and the grating each had three locks, the same for both; and a different key for each of the three, which consequently opened each of the two locks, the one in the door and the one in the grating. The Chief-President kept one key, the Attorney-General another, and the Chief-Greffier of the Parliament the third. The Parliament was assembled and the Chief-President flattered the members as best he might upon the confidence shown them in entrusting them with this deposit.

At the same time was presented to the Parliament an edict that the Chief-President and the Attorney-General had received from the hand of the Chancellor at Versailles the same morning the King had given them his will, and the edict was registered. It was very short. It declared that the packet committed to the Chief-President and to the Attorney-General contained the will of the King, by which he had provided for the protection and guardianship of the young King, and had chosen a Regency council, the dispositions of which for good reasons he had not wished to publish; that he wished this deposit should be preserved during his life in the registry of the Parliament, and that at the moment when it should please God to call him from the world, all the chambers of the Parliament, all the princes of the royal house, and all the peers who might be there, should assemble and

open the will; and that after it was read, all its dispositions should be made public and executed, nobody to be permitted to oppose them in any way.

Notwithstanding all this secrecy, the terms of the will were pretty generally guessed, and as I have said, the consternation was general. It was the fate of M. du Maine to obtain what he wished; but always with the maledictions of the public. This fate did not abandon him now, and as soon as he felt it, he was overwhelmed, and Madame de Maintenon exasperated, and their attentions and their care redoubled, to shut up the King, so that the murmurs of the world should not reach him. They occupied themselves more than ever to amuse and to please him, and to fill the air around him with praises, joy, and public adoring at an act so generous and so grand, and at the same time so wise and so necessary to the maintenance of good order and tranquillity, which would cause him to reign so gloriously even after his reign.

This consternation was very natural, and is precisely why the Duc du Maine found himself deceived and troubled by it. He believed he had prepared everything, smoothed everything, in rendering M. d'Orléans so suspected and so odious; he had succeeded, but not so much as he imagined. His desires and his emissaries had exaggerated everything; and he found himself overwhelmed with astonishment, when instead of the public acclamations with which he had flattered himself the will would be accompanied, it was precisely the opposite.

It was seen very clearly that the will assuredly could not have been made in favour of M. d'Orléans, and although public feeling against him had in no way changed, no one was so blind as not to see that he must be Regent by the incontestable right of his birth; that the dispositions of the testament could not weaken

that right, except by establishing a power that should balance his; and that thus two parties would be formed in the state the chief of each of which would be interested in vanquishing the other, everybody being necessitated to join one side or other, thereby running a thousand risks without any advantage. The rights of the two disputants were compared. In the one they were found sacred, in the other they could not be found at all. The two persons were compared. Both were found odious, but M. d'Orléans was deemed superior to M. du Maine. I speak only of the mass of uninstructed people, and of what presented itself naturally and of itself. The better informed had even more cause to arrive at the same decision.

M. d'Orléans was stunned by the blow; he felt that it fell directly upon him, but during the lifetime of the King he saw no remedy for it. Silence respectful and profound appeared to him the sole course open; any other would only have led to an increase of precautions. The King avoided all discourse with him upon this matter; M. du Maine the same. M. d'Orléans was contented with a simple approving monosyllable to both, like a courtier who ought not to meddle with anything; and he avoided conversation upon this subject, even with Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, and with anybody else. I was the sole person to whom he dared to unbosom himself; with the rest of the world he had an open, an ordinary manner, was on his guard against any discontented sign, and against the curiosity of all eyes. The inexpressible abandonment in which he was, in the midst of the Court, guaranteed him at least from all remarks upon the will. It was not until the health of the King grew more menacing that he began to speak and be spoken to thereon.

As for M. du Maine, despite his good fortune, he was not to be envied. At Sceaux, where he lived, the

Duchesse du Maine, his wife, ruined him by her extravagance. Sceaux was more than ever the theatre of her follies, and of the shame and embarrassment of her husband, by the crowd from the Court and the town, which abounded there and laughed at them. She herself played there Athalie (assisted by actors and actresses) and other pieces several times a week. Whole nights were passed in coteries, games, fêtes, illuminations, fireworks,—in a word, fancies and fripperies of every kind and every day. She revelled in the joy of her new greatness—redoubled her follies; and the Duc du Maine, who always trembled before her, and who, moreover, feared that the slightest contradiction would entirely turn her brain, suffered all this, even piteously doing the honours as often as he could without ceasing in his conduct to the King.

However great might be his joy, whatever the unimaginable greatness to which he had arrived, he was not tranquil. Like those tyrants who have usurped by their crimes the sovereign power, and who fear as so many conspiring enemies all their fallen citizens they have enslaved—he felt as though seated under that sword that Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, suspended by a hair over his table, above the head of a man whom he placed there because he believed him happy, and in this manner wished to make him feel what passed unceasingly in himself. M. du Maine, who willingly expressed in pleasantry the most serious things, frankly said to his familiars, that he was "like a louse between two finger-nails" (the Princes of the blood and the peers), by which he could not fail to be cracked if he did not take care! This reflection troubled the excess of his pleasure, and that of the greatness and the power to which so many artifices had elevated him. He feared the Princes of the blood as soon as they should be of age to feel the infamy and the danger

of the wound he had given them; he feared the Parliament, which even under his eyes had not been able to dissimulate its indignation at the violence he had committed against the most holy and the most inviolable laws; he even feared the Dukes, so timid are injustice and tyranny!

CHAPTER LXIX

LET me return to Maisons. Five days after the King's will had been walled up, in the manner I have described, he came to me and made a pathetic discourse upon the injustice done to M. le Duc d'Orléans by this testament, and did all he could to excite me by railing in good set terms against dispositions intended to add to the power and grandeur of the bastards.

When he had well harangued, I said he had told me nothing new; that I saw the same truths as he with the same evidence; that the worst thing I found was that there was no remedy.

"No remedy!" he exclaimed, interrupting me, with his sly and cunning laugh; "courage and ability can always find one for everything, and I am astonished that you, who have both, should have nothing to suggest while everybody is going to confusion."

I asked him how it was possible to suppress a will registered by edict; a document solemn and public deposited with ceremony in the very depths of the palace, with precautions known to everybody—nature and art combining to keep it in safety?

"You are at a loss to know!" replied Maisons to me. "Have ready at the instant of the King's death sure troops and sensible officers, all ready and well instructed; and with them, masons and locksmiths—march to the palace, break open the doors and the wall, carry off the will, and let it never be seen."

In my extreme surprise I asked him, what he expected would be the fruit of such violence? I pointed

out that to seize by force of arms a public and solemn document, in the midst of the capital, in despite of all law and order, would be to put weapons into the hands of the enemies of M. le Duc d'Orléans, who assuredly would be justified in crying out against this outrage, and who would find the whole country disposed to echo their cries. I said too, that if in the execution of such an odious scheme a sedition occurred, and blood were shed, universal hatred and opprobrium would fall upon the head of M. le Duc d'Orléans, and deservedly so.

We carried on our discussion a long time, but Maisons would in no way give up his scheme. After leaving me he went to M. le Duc d'Orléans and communicated it to him. Happily it met with no success with the Duke, indeed, he was extremely astonished at it; but what astonished us more was, that Maisons persisted in it up to his death, which preceded by some few days that of the King, and pressed it upon M. le Duc d'Orléans and myself till his importunity became persecution.

It was certainly not his fault that I over and over again refused to go to the Grand Chamber of the Parliament to examine the place, as Maisons wished me to do; I who never went to the Parliament except for the reception of the peers or when the King was there. Not being able to vanquish what he called my obstinacy, Maisons begged me at the least to go and fix myself upon the Quai de la Megisserie, where so much old iron is sold, and examine from that spot the tower where the will was; he pointed it out to me; it looked out upon the Quai des Morfondus, but was behind the buildings on the quai. What information could be obtained from such a point of view may be imagined. I promised to go there, not to stop, and thus awake the attention of the passers-by, but to

pass along and see what was to be seen; adding, that it was simply out of complaisance to him, and not because I meant to agree in any way to his enterprise.

What is incomprehensible is, that for a whole year Maisons pressed his charming project upon us. The worst enemy of M. le Duc d'Orléans could not have devised a more rash and ridiculous undertaking. I doubt whether many people would have been found in all Paris sufficiently deprived of sense to fall in with it. What are we to think then of a Parliamentary President of such consideration as Maisons had acquired at the Palace of Justice, at the Court, in the town, where he had always passed for a man of intellect, prudent, circumspect, intelligent, capable, measured? Was he vile enough, in concert with M. du Maine, to open this gulf beneath our feet, to push us to our ruin, and by the fall of M. le Duc d'Orléans—the sole prince of the blood old enough to be Regent—to put M. le Duc du Maine in his place, from which to the crown there was only one step, as none are ignorant, left to be taken? It seems by no means impossible: M. du Maine, that son of darkness, was, judging him by what he had already done, quite capable of adding this new crime to his long list.

The mystery was, however, never explained. Maisons died before its darkness could be penetrated. His end was terrible. He had no religion; his father had had none. He married a sister of the Maréchal de Villars, who was in the same case. Their only son they specially educated in unbelief. Nevertheless, everything seemed to smile upon them. They had wealth, consideration, distinguished friends. But mark the end.

Maisons is slightly unwell. He takes rhubarb twice or thrice, unseasonably; more unseasonably comes Cardinal de Bissy to him, to talk upon the constitution,

and thus hinder the operation of the rhubarb; his inside seems on fire, but he will not believe himself ill; the progress of his disease is great in a few hours; the doctors, though soon at their wits' ends, dare not say so; the malady visibly increases; his whole household is in confusion; he dies, forty-eight years of age, in the midst of a crowd of friends, of clients, without power or leisure to think for a moment what is going to happen to his soul!

His wife survives him ten or twelve years, opulent, and in consideration, when suddenly she has an attack of apoplexy in her garden. Instead of thinking of her state, and profiting by leisure, she makes light of her illness, has another attack a few days after, and is carried off on the 5th of May, 1727, in her forty-sixth year, without having had a moment free.

Her son, for a long time much afflicted, seeks to distinguish himself and acquire friends. Taking no warning from what has occurred, he thinks only of running after the fortune of this world, and is surprised at Paris by the small-pox. He believes himself dead, thinks of what he has neglected all his life, but fear suddenly seizes him, and he dies in the midst of it, on the 13th of September, 1731, leaving an only son, who dies a year after him, eighteen months old, all the great wealth of the family going to collateral relatives.

These Memoirs are not essays on morality, therefore I have contented myself with the most simple and the most naked recital of facts; but I may, perhaps, be permitted to apply here those two verses of the 37th Psalm, which appear so expressly made for the purpose: "I have seen the impious exalted like the cedars of Lebanon: Yea, he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found."

But let me leave this subject now, to treat of other matters. On Friday, the last day of August, I lost one of the best and most revered of friends, the Duc de Beauvilliers. He died at Vaucresson after an illness of about two months, his intellect clear to the last, aged sixty-six years, having been born on the 24th of October, 1648.

He was the son of M. de Saint-Aignan, who with honour and valour was truly romantic in gallantry, in belles-lettres, and in arms. He was Captain of the Guards of Gaston, and at the end of 1649 bought of the Duc de Liancourt the post of first-gentleman of the King's chamber. He commanded afterwards in Berry against the party of M. le Prince, and served elsewhere subsequently. In 1661 he was made Chevalier of the Order, and in 1661 Duke and Peer. His first wife he lost in 1679. At the end of a year he married one of her chambermaids, who had been first of all engaged to take care of her dogs. She was so modest, and he so shamefaced, that in despite of repeated pressing on the part of the King, she could not be induced to take her tabouret. She lived in much retirement, and had so many virtues that she made herself respected all her life, which was long. M. de Beauvilliers was one of the children of the first marriage. I know not what care M. and Madame de Saint-Aignan took of the others, but they left him, until he was six or seven years of age, to the mercy of their lodge-keeper. Then he was confided to the care of a canon of Notre Dame de Clery. The household of the canon consisted of one maid-servant, with whom the little boy slept; and they continued to sleep together until he was fourteen or fifteen years old, without either of them thinking of evil, or the canon remarking that the lad was growing into a man. The death of his eldest brother called M. de Beauvilliers home. He entered

the army, served with distinction at the head of his regiment of cavalry, and was brigadier.

He was tall, thin, had a long and ruddy face, a large aquiline nose, a sunken mouth, expressive, piercing eyes, an agreeable smile, a very gentle manner, but ordinarily retiring, serious, and concentrated. By disposition he was hasty, hot, passionate, fond of pleasure. Ever since God had touched him, which happened early in his life, he had become gentle, modest, humble, kind, enlightened, charitable, and always full of real piety and goodness. In private, where he was free, he was gay, joked, and bantered pleasantly, and laughed with good heart. He liked to be made fun of: there was only the story of his sleeping with the canon's servant that wounded his modesty, and I have seen him embarrassed when Madame de Beauvilliers has related it,—smiling, however, but praying her sometimes not to tell it. His piety, which, as I have said, commenced early in life, separated him from companions of his own age. At the army one day, during a promenade of the King, he walked alone, a little in front. Some one remarked it, and observed, sneeringly, that "he was meditating." The King, who heard this, turned towards the speaker, and, looking at him, said, "Yes, 'tis M. de Beauvilliers, one of the best men of the Court, and of my realm." This sudden and short apology caused silence, and food for reflection, so that the fault-finders remained in respect before his merit.

The King must have entertained a high regard for him, to give him, in 1670, the very delicate commission he entrusted to him. Madame had just been so openly poisoned, the conviction was so complete and so general that it was very difficult to palliate it. Our King and the King of England, between whom she had just become a stronger bond, by the journey she

had made into England, were penetrated by grief and indignation, and the English could not contain themselves. The King chose the Duc de Beauvilliers to carry his compliments of condolence to the King of England, and under this pretext to try to prevent this misfortune interfering with their friendship and their union, and to calm the fury of London and the nation. The King was not deceived: the prudent dexterity of the Duc de Beauvilliers brought round the King of England, and even appeased London and the nation.

M. de Beauvilliers had expressed a wish to be buried at Montargis, in the Benedictine monastery, where eight of his daughters had become nuns. Madame de Beauvilliers went there, and by an act of religion, terrible to think of, insisted upon being present at the interment. She retired to her house at Paris, where during the rest of her life she lived in complete solitude, without company or amusement of any kind. For nearly twenty years she remained there, and died in 1733, seventy-five years of age, infinitely rich in alms and all sorts of good works.

The King taxed the infantry regiments, which had risen to an excessive price. This venality of the only path by which the superior grades can be reached is a great blot upon the military system, and stops the career of many a man who would become an excellent soldier. It is a gangrene which for a long time has eaten into all the orders and all the parties of the state, and under which it will be odd if all do not succumb. Happily it is unknown, or little known, in all the other countries of Europe!

Towards the end of this year Cardinal d'Estrées died in Paris at his abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, nearly eighty-seven years of age, having always enjoyed perfect health of body and mind until this illness, which was very short, and which left his intellect clear to the

last. It is proper and curious to pause for a moment upon a personage, all his life of importance, and who at his death was Cardinal, Bishop of Albano, Abbé of Longpont, of Mount Saint-Eloi, of Saint-Nicholas-aux-Bois, of La Staffarde in Piedmont (where Catinat gained a celebrated battle before being Maréchal of France), of Saint-Claude in Franche-Comté, of Anchin in Flanders, and of Saint-Germain-des-Prés in Paris. He was also Commander of the Order of the promotion of 1688.

Merit, aided by the chances of fortune, made out of an obscure family of the Boulonais country, a singularly illustrious race in the fourth generation, of which Mademoiselle de Tourbes alone remains. The Cardinal, brother of the last Maréchal d'Estrées, their uncle, used to say, that he knew his fathers as far as the one who had been page of Queen Anne, Duchess of Brittany; but beyond that he knew nothing, and it was not worth while searching. Gabrielle d'Estrées, mistress of Henry IV., whose beauty made her father's fortune, and whose history is too well known to be here alluded to, was sister of the Cardinal's father, but died thirty years before he was born. It was through her that the family became elevated. The father of Cardinal d'Estrées was distinguished all his life by his merit, his capacity, and the authority and elevated posts he held. He was made Marshal of France in 1626, and it is a thing unique that he, his son, and his grandson were not only Marshals of France, but all three were in succession seniors of that corps for a long time.

The Cardinal d'Estrées was born in 1627, and for forty years lived with his father, profiting by his lessons and his consideration. He was of the most agreeable manners, handsome, well made, full of humour, wit, and ability; in society the pleasantest person in

the world, and yet well instructed; indeed, of rare erudition, generous, obliging, dignified, incapable of meanness, he was with so much talent and so many great and amiable qualities generally loved and respected, and deserved to be. He was made Cardinal in 1671, but was not declared until after many delays had occurred. These delays much disturbed him. It was customary, then, to pay more visits. One evening the Abbé de la Victoire, one of his friends, and very witty, arrived very late at a supper, in a house where he was expected. The company inopportunely asked him where he had been, and what had delayed him.

"Alas!" replied the Abbé, in a tone of sadness, "where have I been? I have been all day accompanying the body of poor M. de Laon." [The Cardinal d'Estrées was then Bishop and Duke of Laon.]

"M. de Laon!" cried everybody, "M. de Laon dead! Why, he was quite well yesterday. 'Tis dreadful. Tell us what has happened."

"What has happened?" replied the Abbé, still with the same tone. "Why, he took me with him when he paid his visits, and though his body was with me, his spirit was at Rome, so that I quitted him very wearied." At this recital grief changed into merriment.

That grand dinner at Fontainebleau for the Prince of Tuscany, at which the Prince was to be the only guest, and yet never received his invitation from the Cardinal, I have already mentioned. He was oftentimes thus absent, but never when business or serious matters were concerned, so that his forgetfulness was amusing. He never could bear to hear of his domestic affairs. Pressed and tormented by his steward and his maître d'hôtel to overlook their accounts, that he had not seen for many years, he appointed a day to be devoted to them. The two financiers demanded that he

should close his door so as not to be interrupted; he consented with difficulty, then changed his mind, and said that if Cardinal Bonzi came he must be admitted, but that it was not likely he would come on that particular day. Directly afterwards he sent a trusty servant to Cardinal Bonzi, entreating him to come on such and such a day, between three and four o'clock, conjuring him not to fail, and begging him above all to come as of his own accord, the reason to be explained afterwards. On the appointed day Cardinal d'Estrées told his porter to let no one enter in the afternoon except Cardinal Bonzi, who assuredly was not likely to come, but who was not to be sent away if he did. His people, delighted at having their master to themselves all day without interruption, arrived about three o'clock; the Cardinal quitted his family and the few friends who had that day dined with him, and passed into a cabinet where his business people laid out their papers. He said a thousand absurdities to them upon his expenditure, of which he understood nothing, and unceasingly looked towards the window, without appearing to do so, secretly sighing for a prompt deliverance. A little before four o'clock, a coach arrived in the court-yard; his business people, enraged with the porter, exclaimed that there will then be no more opportunity for working. The Cardinal in delight referred to the orders he had given. "You will see," he added, "that it is Cardinal Bonzi, the only man I excepted, and who, of all days in the world, comes to-day."

Immediately afterwards, the Cardinal was announced, and the intendant and maître d'hôtel were forced to make off with their papers and their table. As soon as he was alone with Bonzi, he explained why he had requested this visit, and both laughed heartily. Since then his business people have never caught him

again, never during the rest of his life would he hear speak of them.

He must have had honest people about him; for every day his table was magnificent, and filled at Paris and at the Court with the best company. His equipages were so, also; he had numberless domestics, many gentlemen, chaplains, and secretaries. He gave freely to the poor, and to his brother the Maréchal and his children (who were not well off), and yet died without owing a crown to a living soul.

His death, for which he had been long prepared, was fine—edifying and very Christian-like. He was universally regretted. A joke of his with the King is still remembered. One day, at dinner, where he always paid much attention to the Cardinal, the King complained of the inconvenience he felt in no longer having teeth.

"Teeth, sire!" replied the Cardinal; "why, who *has* any teeth?"

The joke is that the Cardinal, though old, still had very white and very beautiful teeth, and that his mouth, large, but agreeable, was so shaped that it showed them plainly in speaking. Therefore the King burst out laughing at this reply, and all present also, including the Cardinal, who was not in the slightest degree embarrassed. I might go on forever telling about him, but enough, perhaps, has been already said.

The commencement of the new year, 1715, was marked by the death of Fénelon, at Cambrai, where he had lived in disgrace so many years. I have already said something about him, so that I have now but little to add. His life at Cambrai was remarkable for the assiduity with which he attended to the spiritual and temporal wants of his flock. He was indefatigable in the discharge of his functions, and in endeavouring to gain all hearts. Cambrai is a place much fre-

quented; through which many people pass. During the war the number of wounded soldiers he had received into his house or attended to in the hospitals passes all belief. He spared nothing for them, neither physical comforts nor spiritual consolations. Thus it is incredible to what an extent he became the idol of the whole army. His manners, to high and low, were most affable, yet everywhere he was the prelate, the gentleman, the author of "Telemachus." He ruled his diocese with a gentle hand, in no way meddled with the Jansenists; he left all untouched. Take him for all in all, he had a bright genius and was a great man. His admiration true or feigned for Madame Guyon remained to the last, yet always without suspicion of impropriety. He had so exactly arranged his affairs that he died without money, and yet without owing a sou to anybody.

CHAPTER LXX

THE reign of Louis XIV. was approaching its conclusion, so that there is now nothing more to relate but what passed during the last month of his life, and scarcely so much. These events, indeed, so curious and so important, are so mixed up with those that immediately followed the King's death, that they cannot be separated from them. It will be interesting and is necessary to describe the projects, the thoughts, the difficulties, the different resolutions, which occupied the brain of the Prince, who, despite the efforts of Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine, was of necessity about to be called to the head of affairs during the minority of the young King. This is the place, therefore, to explain all these things, after which we will resume the narrative of the last month of the King's life, and go on to the events which followed his death.

But, as I have said, before entering upon this thorny path, it will be as well to make known, if possible, the chief personage of the story, the impediments interior and exterior in his path, and all that personally belonged to him.

M. le Duc d'Orléans was, at the most, of mediocre stature, full-bodied without being fat; his manner and his deportment were easy and very noble; his face was broad and very agreeable, high in colour; his hair black, and wig the same. Although he danced very badly, and had but ill succeeded at the riding-school, he had in his face, in his gestures, in all his movements,

infinite grace, and so natural that it adorned even his most ordinary commonplace actions. With much ease when nothing constrained him, he was gentle, affable, open, of facile and charming access; the tone of his voice was agreeable, and he had a surprisingly easy flow of words upon all subjects which nothing ever disturbed, and which never failed to surprise; his eloquence was natural and extended even to his most familiar discourse, while it equally entered into his observations upon the most abstract sciences, on which he talked most perspicuously; the affairs of government, politics, finance, justice, war, the court, ordinary conversation, the arts, and mechanics. He could speak as well too upon history and memoirs, and was well acquainted with pedigrees. The personages of former days were familiar to him; and the intrigues of the ancient courts were to him as those of his own time. To hear him, you would have thought him a great reader. Not so. He skimmed; but his memory was so singular that he never forgot things, names, or dates, cherishing remembrance of things with precision; and his apprehension was so good, that in skimming thus it was, with him, precisely as though he had read very laboriously. He excelled in unpremeditated discourse, which, whether in the shape of repartee or jest, was always appropriate and vivacious. He often reproached me, and others more than he, with "not spoiling him;" but I often gave him praise merited by few, and which belonged to nobody so justly as to him; it was, that besides having infinite ability and of various kinds, the singular perspicuity of his mind was joined to so much exactness, that he would never have made a mistake in anything if he had allowed the first suggestions of his judgment. He oftentimes took this my eulogy as a reproach, and he was not always wrong, but it was not the less true. With all this he

had no presumption, no trace of superiority natural or acquired; he reasoned with you as with his equal, and struck the most able with surprise. Although he never forgot his own position, nor allowed others to forget it, he carried no constraint with him, but put everybody at his ease, and placed himself upon the level of all others.

He had the weakness to believe that he resembled Henry IV. in everything, and strove to affect the manners, the gestures, the bearing, of that monarch. Like Henry IV. he was naturally good, humane, compassionate; and, indeed, this man, who has been so cruelly accused of the blackest and most inhuman crimes, was more opposed to the destruction of others than any one I have ever known, and had such a singular dislike to causing anybody pain that it may be said, his gentleness, his humanity, his easiness, had become faults; and I do not hesitate to affirm, that that supreme virtue which teaches us to pardon our enemies he turned into vice, by the indiscriminate prodigality with which he applied it; thereby causing himself many sad embarrassments and misfortunes, examples and proofs of which will be seen in the sequel.

I remember that about a year, perhaps, before the death of the King, having gone up early after dinner into the apartments of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans at Marly, I found her in bed with the megrims, and M. d'Orléans alone in the room, seated in an armchair at her pillow. Scarcely had I sat down than Madame la Duchesse began to talk of some of those execrable imputations concerning M. d'Orléans unceasingly circulated by Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine; and of an incident arising therefrom, in which the Prince and the Cardinal de Rohan had played a part against M. d'Orléans. I sympathised with her all the more because the Duke, I knew not

why, had always distinguished and courted those two brothers, and thought he could count upon them. "And what will you say of M. d'Orléans," added the Duchesse, "when I tell you that since he has known this, known it beyond doubt, he treats them exactly the same as before?"

I looked at M. d'Orléans, who had uttered only a few words to confirm the story, as it was being told, and who was negligently lolling in his chair, and I said to him with warmth:

"Oh, as to that, Monsieur, the truth must be told; since Louis the Débonnaire, never has there been such a Débonnaire as you."

At these words he rose in his chair, red with anger to the very whites of his eyes, and blurted out his vexation against me for abusing him, as he pretended, and against Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans for encouraging me and laughing at him.

"Go on," said I, "treat your enemies well, and rail at your friends. I am delighted to see you angry. It is a sign that I have touched the sore point, when you press the finger on it the patient cries. I should like to squeeze out all the matter, and after that you would be quite another man, and differently esteemed."

He grumbled a little more, and then calmed down. This was one of two occasions only, on which he was ever really angry with me.

Two or three years after the death of the King, I was chatting in one of the grand rooms of the Tuileries, where the Council of the Regency was, according to custom, soon to be held, and M. d'Orléans at the other end was talking to some one in a window recess. I heard myself called from mouth to mouth, and was told that M. d'Orléans wished to speak to me. This often happened before the Council. I went therefore to the window where he was standing. I found

a serious bearing, a concentrated manner, an angry face, and was much surprised.

"Monsieur," said he to me at once, "I have a serious complaint against you; you, whom I have always regarded as my best of friends."

"Against me! Monsieur!" said I, still more surprised. "What is the matter, then, may I ask?"

"The matter!" he replied with a mien still more angry; "something you cannot deny;—verses you have made against me."

"I—verses!" was my reply. "Why, who the devil has been telling you such nonsense? You have been acquainted with me nearly forty years, and do you not know, that never in my life have I been able to make a single verse—much less verses?"

"No, no, by Heaven," replied he, "you cannot deny these;" and forthwith he began to sing to me a street song in his praise, the chorus of which was: *Our Regent is débonnaire, la la, he is débonnaire,* with a burst of laughter.

"What!" said I, "you remember it still!" and smiling, I added also, "since you are revenged for it, remember it in good earnest." He kept on laughing a long time before going to the Council, and could not hinder himself. I have not been afraid to write this trifle, because it seems to me that it paints the man.

M. d'Orléans loved liberty, and as much for others as for himself. He extolled England to me one day on this account, as a country where there are no banishments, no *lettres de cachet,* and where the King may close the door of his palace to anybody, but can keep no one in prison; and thereupon related to me with enjoyment, that besides the Duchess of Portsmouth, Charles the Second had many subordinate mistresses; that the Grand Prieur, young and amiable in those days, driven out of France for some folly, had

gone to England to pass his exile and had been well received by the King. By way of thanks, he seduced one of those mistresses, by whom the King was then so smitten, that he sued for mercy, offered money to the Grand Prieur, and undertook to obtain his reconciliation in France. The Grand Prieur held firm. Charles prohibited him the palace. He laughed at this, and went every day to the theatre, with his conquest, and placed himself opposite the King. At last, Charles, not knowing what to do to deliver himself from his tormentor, begged our King to recall him, and this was done. But the Grand Prieur said he was very comfortable in England and continued his game. Charles, outraged, confided to the King (Louis XIV.) the state he was thrown into by the Grand Prieur, and obtained a command so absolute and so prompt, that his tormentor was afterwards obliged to go back into France.

M. d'Orléans admired this; and I know not if he would not have wished to be the Grand Prieur. He always related this story with delight. Thus, of ambition for reigning or governing, he had none. If he made a false move in Spain it was because he had been misdirected. What he would have liked best would have been to command armies while war lasted, and divert himself the rest of the time without constraint to himself or to others. He was, in fact, very fit for this. With much valour, he had also much foresight, judgment, coolness, and vast capacity. It may be said that he was captain, engineer, and army purveyor; that he knew the strength of his troops, the names and the company of the officers, and the most distinguished of each corps; that he knew how to make himself adored, at the same time keeping up discipline, and could execute the most difficult things, while unprovided with everything. Unfortunately

there is another side of this picture, which it will be as well now to describe.

M. d'Orléans, by disposition so adapted to become the honour and the master-piece of an education, was not fortunate in his teachers. Saint-Laurent, to whom he was first confided, was, it is true, the man in all Europe best fitted to act as the instructor of kings, but he died before his pupil was beyond the birch, and the young Prince, as I have related, fell entirely into the hands of the Abbé Dubois. This person has played such an important part in the state since the death of the King, that it is fit that he should be made known. The Abbé Dubois was a little, pitiful, wizened, herring-gutted man, in a flaxen wig, with a weazel's face, brightened by some intellect. In familiar terms, he was a regular scamp. All the vices unceasingly fought within him for supremacy, so that a continual uproar filled his mind. Avarice, debauchery, ambition, were his gods; perfidy, flattery, foot-licking his means of action; complete impiety was his repose; and he held the opinion as a great principle, that probity and honesty are chimeras, with which people deck themselves, but which have no existence. In consequence, all means were good to him. He excelled in low intrigues; he lived in them, and could not do without them; but they always had an aim, and he followed them with a patience terminated only by success, or by firm conviction that he could not reach what he aimed at, or unless, as he wandered thus in deep darkness, a glimmer of light came to him from some other cranny. He passed thus his days in sapping and counter-sapping. The most impudent deceit had become natural to him, and was concealed under an air that was simple, upright, sincere, often bashful. He would have spoken with grace and forcibly, if, fearful of saying more than he wished, he had not accus-

tomed himself to a fictitious hesitation, a stuttering which disfigured his speech, and which, redoubled when important things were in question, became insupportable and sometimes unintelligible. He had wit, learning, knowledge of the world, much desire to please and insinuate himself, but all was spoiled by an odour of falsehood which escaped in spite of him through every pore of his body—even in the midst of his gaiety, which made whoever beheld it sad. Wicked besides, with reflection, both by nature and by argument, treacherous and ungrateful, expert in the blackest villainies, terribly brazen when detected; he desired everything, envied everything, and wished to seize everything. It was known afterwards, when he no longer could restrain himself, to what an extent he was selfish, debauched, inconsistent, ignorant of everything, passionate, headstrong, blasphemous and mad, and to what an extent he publicly despised his master, the state, and all the world, never hesitating to sacrifice everybody and everything to his credit, his power, his absolute authority, his greatness, his avarice, his fears, and his vengeance.

Such was the sage to whom M. le Duc d'Orléans was confided in early youth!

Such a good master did not lose his pains with his new disciple, in whom the excellent principles of Saint-Laurent had not had time to take deep root, whatever esteem and affection he may have preserved through life for that worthy man. I will admit here, with bitterness, for everything should be sacrificed to the truth, that M. le Duc d'Orléans brought into the world a failing—let us call things by their names—a weakness, which unceasingly spoiled all his talents, and which were of marvellous use to his preceptor all his life. Dubois led him into debauchery, made him despise all duty and all decency, and persuaded him

that he had too much mind to be the dupe of religion, which he said was a politic invention to frighten ordinary intellects, and keep the people in subjection. He filled him too with his favourite principle, that probity in man and virtue in woman, are mere chimeras, without existence in anybody except a few poor slaves of early training. This was the basis of the good ecclesiatic's doctrines, whence arose the license of falsehood, deceit, artifice, infidelity, perfidy; in a word, every villainy, every crime, was turned into policy, capacity, greatness, liberty and depth of intellect, enlightenment, good conduct, if it could be hidden, and if suspicions and common prejudices could be avoided.

Unfortunately all conspired in M. d'Orléans to open his heart and his mind to this execrable poison: a fresh and early youth, much strength and health, joy at escaping from the yoke as well as vexation at his marriage, the wearisomeness produced by idleness, the impulse of his passions, the example of other young men, whose vanity and whose interest it was to make him live like them. Thus he grew accustomed to debauchery, above all to the uproar of it, so that he could not do without it, and could only divert himself by dint of noise, tumult, and excess. It is this which led him often into such strange and such scandalous debauches, and as he wished to surpass all his companions, to mix up with his parties of pleasure the most impious discourses, and as a precious refinement, to hold the most outrageous orgies on the most holy days, as he did several times during his Regency on Good Friday, by choice, and on other similar days. The more debauched a man was, the more he esteemed him; and I have unceasingly seen him in admiration, that reached almost to veneration for the Grand Prieur,—because for forty years he had always gone to bed drunk, and had never ceased to keep mistresses

in the most public manner, and to hold the most impious and irreligious discourses. With these principles, and the conduct that resulted from them, it is not surprising that M. le Duc d'Orléans was false to such an extent, that he boasted of his falsehood, and plumed himself upon being the most skilful deceiver in the world. He and Madame la Duchesse de Berry sometimes disputed which was the cleverer of the two; and this in public before M. le Duc de Berry, Madame de Saint-Simon, and others!

M. le Duc d'Orléans, following out the traditions of the Palais Royal, had acquired the detestable taste and habit of embroiling people one with the other, so as to profit by their divisions. This was one of his principal occupations during all the time he was at the head of affairs, and one that he liked the best; but which, as soon as discovered, rendered him odious, and caused him a thousand annoyances. He was not wicked, far from it; but he could not quit the habits of impiety, debauchery, and deceit into which Dubois had led him. A remarkable feature in his character is, that he was suspicious and full of confidence at the same time with reference to the very same people.

It is surprising that with all his talents he was totally without honest resources for amusing himself. He was born bored; and he was so accustomed to live out of himself, that it was insufferable to him to return, incapable as he was of trying even to occupy himself. He could only live in the midst of the movement and torrent of business; at the head of an army for instance, or in the cares that arose out of the execution of campaign projects, or in the excitement and uproar of debauchery. He began to languish as soon as he was without noise, excess, and tumult, the time painfully hanging upon his hands. He cast himself upon painting, when his great fancy for chemistry

had passed or grown deadened, in consequence of what had been said upon it. He painted nearly all the afternoon at Versailles and at Marly. He was a good judge of pictures, liked them, and made a collection, which in number and excellence was not surpassed by those of the Crown. He amused himself afterwards in making composition stones and seals over charcoal, the fumes of which often drove me away; and the strongest perfumes, which he was fond of all his life, but from which I turned him because the King was very much afraid of them, and soon sniffed them. In fact, never was man born with so many talents of all kinds, so much readiness and facility in making use of them, and yet never was man so idle, so given up to vacuity and weariness. Thus Madame painted him very happily by an illustration from fairy tales, of which she was full.

She said, that all the fairies had been invited to his birth; that all came, and that each gave him some talent, so that he had them all. But, unfortunately, an old fairy, who had disappeared so many years ago that she was no longer remembered, had been omitted from the invitation lists. Piqued at this neglect, she came supported upon her little wand, just at the moment when all the rest had endowed the child with their gifts. More and more vexed, she revenged herself by rendering useless all the talents he had received from the other fairies, not one of which, though possessing them all, in consequence of her malediction, was he able to make use of. It must be admitted, that on the whole this is a speaking portrait.

One of the misfortunes of this Prince was being incapable of following up anything, and an inability to comprehend, even, how any one else could do so. Another, was a sort of insensibility which rendered him indifferent to the most mortal and the most dan-

gerous offences; and as the nerve and principle of hatred and friendship, of gratitude and vengeance, are the same, and as they were wanting in him, the consequences were infinite and pernicious. He was timid to excess, knew it, and was so ashamed that he affected to be exactly the reverse, and plumed himself upon his daring. But the truth is, as was afterwards seen, nothing could be obtained from him, neither grace, nor justice, except by working upon his fears, to which he was very susceptible; or by extreme importunity. He tried to put people off by words, then by promises, of which he was monstrously prodigal, but which he only kept when made to people who had good firm claws. In this manner he broke so many engagements that the most positive became counted as nothing; and he promised moreover to so many different people, what could only be given to one, that he thus opened out a copious source of discredit to himself and caused much discontent. Nothing deceived or injured him more than the opinion he had formed, that he could deceive all the world. He was no longer believed, even when he spoke with the best faith, and his facility much diminished the value of everything he did. To conclude, the obscure, and for the most part blackguard company, which he ordinarily frequented in his debauches, and which he did not scruple publicly to call his roués, drove away all decent people, and did him infinite harm.

His constant mistrust of everything and everybody was disgusting, above all when he was at the head of affairs. The fault sprang from his timidity, which made him fear his most certain enemies, and treat them with more distinction than his friends; from his natural easiness, from a false imitation of Henry IV., in whom this quality was by no means the finest; and from the unfortunate opinion which he held, that

probity was a sham. He was, nevertheless, persuaded of my probity; and would often reproach me with it as a fault and prejudice of education which had cramped my mind and obscured my understanding, and he said as much of Madame de Saint-Simon, because he believed her virtuous. I had given him so many proofs of my attachment that he could not very well suspect me; and yet, this is what happened two or three years after the establishment of the Regency. I give it as one of the most striking of the touches that paint his portrait.

It was autumn. M. d'Orléans had dismissed the councils for a fortnight. I profited by this to go and spend the time at La Ferté. I had just passed an hour alone with the Duke, and had taken my leave of him and gone home, where in order to be in repose I had closed my door to everybody. In about an hour at most, I was told that Biron, with a message from M. le Duc d'Orléans, was at the door, with orders to see me, and that he would not go away without. I allowed Biron to enter, all the more surprised because I had just quitted M. le Duc d'Orléans, and eagerly asked him the news. Biron was embarrassed, and in his turn asked where was the Marquis de Ruffec (my son). At this my surprise increased, and I demanded what he meant. Biron, more and more confused, admitted that M. le Duc d'Orléans wanted information on this point, and had sent him for it. I replied, that my son was with his regiment at Besançon, lodging with M. de Lévi, who commanded in Franche-Comté.

"Oh," said Biron, "I know that very well; but have you any letter from him?"

"What for?" I asked.

"Because, frankly, since I must tell you all," said he, "M. le Duc d'Orléans wishes to see his handwriting."

He added, that soon after I had quitted M. le Duc d'Orléans, whilst he was walking at Montmartre in a garden with his *roués* and his harlots, some letters had been brought to him by a post-office clerk, to whom he had spoken in private; that afterwards he, Biron, had been called by the Duke, who showed him a letter from the Marquis de Ruffec to his master, dated "Madrid," and charged him, thereupon, with this present commission.

At this recital I felt a mixture of anger and compassion, and I did not constrain myself with Biron. I had no letters from my son, because I used to burn them, as I did all useless papers. I charged Biron to say to M. le Duc d'Orléans a part of what I felt; that I had not the slightest acquaintance with anybody in Spain; that I begged him at once to despatch a courier there in order to satisfy himself that my son was at Besançon.

Biron, shrugging his shoulders, said all that was very good, but that if I could find a letter from the Marquis de Ruffec it would be much better; adding, that if one turned up and I sent it to him, he would take care that it reached M. le Duc d'Orléans, at table, in spite of the privacy of his suppers. I did not wish to return to the Palais Royal to make a scene there, and dismissed Biron. Fortunately, Madame de Saint-Simon came in some time after. I related to her this adventure. She found the last letter of the Marquis de Ruffec, and we sent it to Biron. It reached the table as he had promised. M. le Duc d'Orléans seized it with eagerness. The joke is that he did not know the handwriting. Not only did he look at the letter, but he read it; and as he found it diverting, regaled his company with it; it became the topic of their discourse, and entirely removed his suspicions. Upon my return from La Ferté, I found him ashamed of himself,

and I rendered him still more so by what I said to him on the subject.

I learnt afterwards that this Madrid letter, and others that followed, came from a sham Marquis de Ruffec, that is to say, from the son of one of Madame's porters, who passed himself off as my son. He pretended that he had quarrelled with me, and wrote to Madame de Saint-Simon, begging her to intercede for him; and all this that his letters might be seen, and that he might reap substantial benefits from his imposture in the shape of money and consideration. He was a well-made fellow, had much address and effrontery, knew the Court very well, and had taken care to learn all about our family, so as to speak within limits. He was arrested at Bayonne, at the table of Dadoncourt, who commanded there, and who suddenly formed the resolution, suspecting him not to be a gentleman, upon seeing him eat olives with a fork! When in gaol he confessed who he was. He was not new at the trade and was confined some little time.

CHAPTER LXXI

BUT to return to M. le Duc d'Orléans.

His curiosity, joined to a false idea of firmness and courage, had early led him to try and raise the devil and make him speak. He left nothing untried, even the wildest reading, to persuade himself there was no God; and yet believed meanwhile in the devil, and hoped to see him and converse with him! This inconsistency is hard to understand, and yet is extremely common. He worked with all sorts of obscure people; and above all with Mirepoix, sub-lieutenant of the Black Musketeers, to find out Satan. They passed whole nights in the quarries of Vanvres and of Vaugirard uttering invocations. M. le Duc d'Orléans, however, admitted to me that he had never succeeded in hearing or seeing anything, and at last had given up this folly.

At first it was only to please Madame d'Argenton, but afterwards from curiosity, that he tried to see the present and the future in a glass of water; so he said, and he was no liar. To be false and to be a liar are not one and the same thing, though they closely resemble each other, and if he told a lie it was only when hard pressed upon some promise or some business, and in spite of himself, so as to escape from a dilemma.

Although we often spoke upon religion, to which I tried to lead him so long as I had hope of success, I never could unravel the system he had formed for himself, and I ended by becoming persuaded that he wavered unceasingly without forming any religion at all.

His passionate desire, like that of his companions in morals, was this, that it would turn out that there is no God; but he had too much enlightenment to be an atheist; who is a particular kind of fool much more rare than is thought. This enlightenment importuned him; he tried to extinguish it and could not. A mortal soul would have been to him a resource; but he could not convince himself of its existence. A God and an immortal soul, threw him into sad straits, and yet he could not blind himself to the truth of both the one and the other. I can say then this, I know of what religion he was not; nothing more. I am sure, however, that he was very ill at ease upon this point, and that if a dangerous illness had overtaken him, and he had had the time, he would have thrown himself into the hands of all the priests and all the Capuchins of the town. His great foible was to pride himself upon his impiety and to wish to surpass in that everybody else.

I recollect that one Christmas-time, at Versailles, when he accompanied the King to morning prayers and to the three midnight masses, he surprised the Court by his continued application in reading a volume he had brought with him, and which appeared to be a prayer book. The chief *femme de chambre* of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, much attached to the family, and very free as all good old domestics are, transfixed with joy at M. le Duc d'Orléans's application to his book, complimented him upon it the next day, in the presence of others. M. le Duc d'Orléans allowed her to go on some time, and then said, "You are very silly, Madame Imbert. Do you know what I was reading? It was 'Rabelais,' that I brought with me for fear of being bored."

The effect of this reply may be imagined. The thing was too true, and was pure braggadocio; for, without

comparison of the places, or of the things, the music of the chapel was much superior to that of the opera, and to all the music of Europe; and at Christmas it surpassed itself. There was nothing so magnificent as the decoration of the chapel, or the manner in which it was lighted. It was full of people; the arches of the tribune were crowded with the Court ladies, in undress, but ready for conquest. There was nothing so surprising as the beauty of the spectacle. The ears were charmed also. M. le Duc d'Orléans loved music extremely; he could compose, and had amused himself by composing a kind of little opera, La Fare writing the words, which was performed before the King. This music of the chapel, therefore, might well have occupied him in the most agreeable manner, to say nothing of the brilliant scene, without his having recourse to Rabelais. But he must needs play the impious, and the wag.

Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans was another kind of person. She was tall, and in every way majestic; her complexion, her throat, her arms, were admirable; she had a tolerable mouth, with beautiful teeth, somewhat long; and cheeks too broad, and too hanging, which interfered with, but did not spoil, her beauty. What disfigured her most was her eyebrows, which were, as it were, peeled and red, with very little hair; she had, however, fine eyelashes, and well-set chestnut-coloured hair. Without being hump-backed or deformed, she had one side larger than the other, and walked awry. This defect in her figure indicated another, which was more troublesome in society, and which inconvenienced herself. She had a good deal of intellect, and spoke with much ability. She said all she wished, and often conveyed her meaning to you without directly expressing it; saying, as it were, what she did not say. Her utterance was, however, slow

and embarrassed, so that unaccustomed ears with difficulty followed her.

Every kind of decency and decorum centred themselves in her, and the most exquisite pride was there upon its throne. Astonishment will be felt at what I am going to say, and yet, however, nothing is more strictly true: it is, that at the bottom of her soul she believed that she, bastard of the King, had much honoured M. d'Orléans in marrying him! M. le Duc d'Orléans often laughed at her pride, called her Madame Lucifer, in speaking to her, and she admitted that the name did not displease her. She always received his advances with coldness, and a sort of superiority of greatness. She was a princess to the backbone, at all hours, and in all places. Yet, at the same time, her timidity was extreme. The King could have made her feel ill with a single severe look; and Madame de Maintenon could have done likewise, perhaps. At all events, Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans trembled before her; and upon the most commonplace matters never replied to either him or her without hesitation, fear printed on her face.

M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans lived an idle, languishing, shameful, indecent, and despised life, abandoned by all the Court. This, I felt, was one of the first things that must be remedied. Accordingly, I induced Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans to make an effort to attract people to her table. She did so, persevering against the coldness and aversion she met with, and in time succeeded in drawing a tolerably numerous company to her dinners. They were of exquisite quality, and people soon got over their first hesitation, when they found everything orderly, free, and unobjectionable. At these dinners, M. d'Orléans kept within bounds, not only in his discourse, but in his behaviour. But oftentimes his ennui led him to

Paris, to join in supper parties and debauchery. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans tried to draw him from these pleasures by arranging small parties at her pretty little villa, l'Etoile (in the park of Versailles), which the King had given to her, and which she had furnished in the most delightful manner. She loved good cheer, the guests loved it also, and at table she was altogether another person—free, gay, exciting, charming. M. le Duc d'Orléans cared for nothing but noise, and as he threw off all restraint at these parties, there was much difficulty in selecting guests, for the ears of many people would have been much confused at his loose talk, and their eyes much astonished to see him get drunk at the very commencement of the repast, in the midst of those who thought only of amusing and recreating themselves in a decent manner, and who never approached intoxication.

As the King became weaker in health, and evidently drew near his end, I had continued interviews with Madame d'Orléans upon the subject of the Regency, the plan of government to be adopted, and the policy she should follow. Hundreds of times before we had reasoned together upon the faults of the Government, and the misfortunes that resulted from them. What we had to do was to avoid those faults, educate the young King in good and rational maxims, so that when he succeeded to power he might continue what the Regency had not had time to finish. This, at least, was my idea, and I laboured hard to make it the idea of M. le Duc d'Orléans. As the health of the King diminished I entered more into details; as I will explain.

What I considered the most important thing to be done, was to overthrow entirely the system of government in which Cardinal Mazarin had imprisoned the King and the realm. A foreigner, risen from the

dregs of the people, who thinks of nothing but his own power and his own greatness, cares nothing for the state, except in its relation to himself. He despises its laws, its genius, its advantages: he is ignorant of its rules and its forms; he thinks only of subjugating all, of confounding all, of bringing all down to one level. Richelieu and his successor, Mazarin, succeeded so well in this policy that the nobility, by degrees, became annihilated, as we now see them. The pen and the robe people, on the other hand, were exalted; so that now things have reached such a pretty pass that the greatest lord is without power, and in a thousand different manners is dependent upon the meanest plebeian. It is in this manner that things hasten from one extreme to the other.

My design was to commence by introducing the nobility into the ministry, with the dignity and authority due to them, and by degrees to dismiss the pen and robe people from all employ not purely judicial. In this manner the administration of public affairs would be entirely in the hands of the aristocracy. I proposed to abolish the two offices of secretary of state for the war department, and for foreign affairs, and to supply their place by councils; also, that the offices of the navy should be managed by a council. I insisted upon the distinct and perfect separation of these councils, so that their authority should never be confounded, and the public should never have the slightest trouble in finding out where to address itself for any kind of business.

M. le Duc d'Orléans exceedingly relished my projest, which we much discussed. This point arrived at, it became necessary to debate upon the persons who were to form these councils. I suggested names, which were accepted or set aside, according as they met his approval or disapprobation. "But," said M.

le Duc d'Orléans, after we had been a long time at this work, "you propose everybody and never say a word of yourself. What do you wish to be?"

I replied, that it was not for me to propose, still less to choose any office, but for him to see if he wished to employ me, believing me capable, and in that case to determine the place he wished me to occupy. This was at Marly, in his chamber, and I shall never forget it.

After some little debate, that between equals would have been called complimentary, he proposed to me the Presidency of the Council of Finance. But I had good reasons for shrinking from this office. I saw that disordered as the finances had become there was only one remedy by which improvement could be effected; and this was National Bankruptcy. Had I occupied the office, I should have been too strongly tempted to urge this view, and carry it out, but it was a responsibility I did not wish to take upon myself before God and man. Yet, I felt as I said, that to declare the State bankrupt would be the wisest course, and I am bold enough to think, that there is not a man, having no personal interest in the continuance of imposts, who of two evils, viz., vastly increased taxation, and national failure, would not prefer the latter. We were in the condition of a man who unfortunately must choose between passing twelve or fifteen years in his bed, in continual pain, or having his leg cut off. Who can doubt this? he would prefer the loss of his leg by a painful operation, in order to find himself two months after quite well, free from suffering and in the enjoyment of all his faculties.

I shrunk accordingly from the finances for the reason I have above given, and made M. le Duc d'Orléans so angry by my refusal to accept the office he had proposed to me, that for three weeks he sulked and

would not speak to me, except upon unimportant matters.

At the end of that time, in the midst of a languishing conversation, he exclaimed, "Very well, then. You stick to your text, you won't have the finances?"

I respectfully lowered my eyes and replied, in a gentle tone, that I thought that question was settled. He could not restrain some complaints, but they were not bitter, nor was he angry, and then rising and taking a few turns in the room, without saying a word, and his head bent, as was his custom when embarrassed, he suddenly spun round upon me, and exclaimed, "But whom shall we put there?"

I suggested the Duc de Noailles, and although the suggestion at first met with much warm opposition from M. le Duc d'Orléans, it was ultimately accepted by him.

The moment after we had settled this point he said to me, "And you! what will you be?" and he pressed me so much to explain myself that I said at last if he would put me in the council of affairs of the interior, I thought I should do better there than elsewhere.

"Chief, then," replied he with vivacity.

"No, no! not that," said I; "simply a place in the council."

We both insisted, he for, I against. "A place in that council," he said, "would be ridiculous, and cannot be thought of. Since you will not be chief, there is only one post which suits you, and which suits me also. You must be in the council I shall be in,—the Supreme Council."

I accepted the post, and thanked him. From that moment this distinction remained fixed.

I will not enter into all the suggestions I offered to M. le Duc d'Orléans respecting the Regency, or give the details of all the projects I submitted to him. Many

of those projects and suggestions were either acted upon only partially, or not acted upon at all, although nearly every one met with his approval. But he was variable as the winds, and as difficult to hold. In my dealings with him I had to do with a person very different from that estimable Dauphin who was so rudely taken away from us.

But let me, before going further, describe the last days of the King, his illness, and death, adding to the narrative a review of his life and character.

CHAPTER LXXII

LOUIS XIV. began, as I have before remarked, sensibly to decline, and his appetite, which had always been good and uniform, very considerably diminished. Even foreign countries became aware of this. Bets were laid in London that his life would not last beyond the first of September, that is to say, about three months, and although the King wished to know everything, it may be imagined that nobody was very eager to make him acquainted with the news. He used to have the Dutch papers read to him in private by Torcy, often after the Council of State. One day as Torcy was reading, coming unexpectedly—for he had not examined the paper—upon the account of these bets, he stopped, stammered, and skipped it. The King, who easily perceived this, asked him the cause of his embarrassment; what he was passing over, and why? Torcy blushed to the very whites of his eyes, and said it was a piece of impertinence unworthy of being read. The King insisted; Torcy also: but at last thoroughly confused, he could not resist the reiterated command he received, and read the whole account of the bets. The King pretended not to be touched by it, but he was, and profoundly, so that sitting down to table immediately afterwards, he could not keep himself from speaking of it, though without mentioning the gazette.

This was at Marly, and by chance I was there that day. The King looked at me as at the others, but as though asking for a reply. I took good care not to open my mouth, and lowered my eyes. Cheverny, (a

discreet man,) too, was not so prudent, but made a long and ill-timed rhapsody upon similar reports that had come to Copenhagen from Vienna while he was ambassador at the former place seventeen or eighteen years before. The King allowed him to say on, but did not take the bait. He appeared touched, but like a man who does not wish to seem so. It could be seen that he did all he could to eat, and to show that he ate with appetite. But it was also seen that the mouthfuls loitered on their way. This trifle did not fail to augment the circumspection of the Court, above all of those who by their position had reason to be more attentive than the rest. It was reported that an aide-de-camp of Lord Stair, who was then English ambassador to our Court, and very much disliked for his insolent bearing and his troublesome ways, had caused these bets by what he had said in England respecting the health of the King. Stair, when told this, was much grieved, and said 'twas a scoundrel he had dismissed.

As the King sensibly declined I noticed that although terror of him kept people as much away from M. d'Orléans as ever, I was approached even by the most considerable. I had often amused myself at the expense of these prompt friends; I did so now, and diverted M. d'Orléans by warning him beforehand what he had to expect.

On Friday, the 9th of August, 1715, the King hunted the stag after dinner in his *calèche,* that he drove himself as usual. 'Twas for the last time. Upon his return he appeared much knocked up. There was a grand concert in the evening in Madame de Maintenon's apartment.

On Saturday, the 10th of August, he walked before dinner in his gardens at Marly; he returned to Versailles about six o'clock in the evening, and never again saw that strange work of his hands. In the evening

he worked with the Chancellor in Madame de Maintenon's rooms, and appeared to everybody very ill. On Sunday, the eleventh of August, he held the Council of State, walked after dinner to Trianon, never more to go out again during life.

On the morrow, the 12th of August, he took medicine as usual, and lived as usual the following days. It was known that he complained of sciatica in the leg and thigh. He had never before had sciatica, or rheumatism, or a cold; and for a long time no touch of gout. In the evening there was a little concert in Madame de Maintenon's rooms. This was the last time in his life that he walked alone.

On Tuesday, the 13th of August, he made a violent effort, and gave a farewell audience to a sham Persian ambassador, whom Pontchartrain had imposed upon him; this was the last public action of his life. The audience, which was long, fatigued the King. He resisted the desire for sleep which came over him, held the Finance Council, dined, had himself carried to Madame de Maintenon's, where a little concert was given, and on leaving his cabinet stopped for the Duchesse de la Rochefoucauld, who presented to him the Duchesse de la Rocheguyon, her daughter-in-law, who was the last lady presented to him. She took her tabouret that evening at the King's grand supper, which was the last he ever gave. On the morrow he sent some precious stones to the Persian ambassador just alluded to. It was on this day that the Princesse des Ursins set off for Lyons, terrified at the state of the King as I have already related.

For more than a year the health of the King had diminished. His valets noticed this first, and followed the progress of the malady, without one of them daring to open his mouth. The bastards, or to speak exactly, M. du Maine saw it; Madame de Maintenon

also; but they did nothing. Fagon, the chief physician, much fallen off in mind and body, was the only one of the King's intimates who saw nothing. Maréchal, also chief physician, spoke to him (Fagon) several times, but was always harshly repulsed. Pressed at last by his duty and his attachment, he made bold one morning towards Whitsuntide to go to Madame de Maintenon. He told her what he saw and how grossly Fagon was mistaken. He assured her that the King, whose pulse he had often felt, had had for some time a slow internal fever; that his constitution was so good that with remedies and attention all would go well, but that if the malady were allowed to grow there would no longer be any resource. Madame de Maintenon grew angry, and all he obtained for his zeal was her anger. She said that only the personal enemies of Fagon could find fault with his opinion upon the King's health, concerning which the capacity, the application, the experience of the chief physician could not be deceived. The best of it is that Maréchal, who had formerly operated upon Fagon for stone, had been appointed chief surgeon by him, and they had always lived on the best of terms. Maréchal, annoyed as he related to me, could do nothing more, and began from that time to lament the death of his master. Fagon was in fact the first physician in Europe, but for a long time his health had not permitted him to maintain his experience; and the high point of authority to which his capacity and his favour had carried him, had at last spoiled him. He would not hear reason, or submit to reply, and continued to treat the King as he had treated him in early years; and killed him by his obstinacy.

The gout of which the King had had long attacks, induced Fagon to swaddle him, so to say, every evening in a heap of feather pillows, which made him sweat

all night to such an extent that it was necessary in the morning to rub him down and change his linen before the grand chamberlain and the first gentleman of the chamber could enter. For many years he had drunk nothing but Burgundy wine, half mixed with water, and so old that it was used up instead of the best champagne which he had used all his life. He would pleasantly say sometimes that foreign lords who were anxious to taste the wine he used, were often mightily deceived. At no time had he ever drunk pure wine, or made use in any way of spirits, or even tea, coffee, or chocolate. Upon rising, instead of a little bread and wine and water, he had taken for a long time two glasses of sage and veronica; often between his meals, and always on going to bed, glasses of water with a little orange-flower water in them, and always iced. Even on the days when he had medicine he drank this, and always also at his meals, between which he never ate anything except some cinnamon lozenges that he put into his pocket at his dessert, with a good many cracknels for the bitches he kept in his cabinet.

As during the last year of his life the King became more and more costive, Fagon made him eat at the commencement of his repasts many iced fruits, that is to say, mulberries, melons, and figs rotten from ripeness; and at his dessert many other fruits, finishing with a surprising quantity of sweetmeats. All the year round he ate at supper a prodigious quantity of salad. His soups, several of which he partook of morning and evening, were full of gravy, and were of exceeding strength, and everything that was served to him was full of spice, to double the usual extent, and very strong also. This regimen and the sweetmeats together Fagon did not like, and sometimes while seeing the King eat, he would make most amusing grimaces, without daring however to say anything except

now and then to Livry and Benoist, who replied that it was their business to feed the King, and his to doctor him. The King never ate any kind of venison or water-fowl, but otherwise partook of everything, fête days and fast days alike, except that during the last twenty years of his life he observed some few days of Lent.

This summer he redoubled his régime of fruits and drinks. At last the former clogged his stomach, taken after soup, weakened the digestive organs and took away his appetite, which until then had never failed him all his life, though however late dinner might be delayed he never was hungry or wanted to eat. But after the first spoonfuls of soup, his appetite came, as I have several times heard him say, and he ate so prodigiously and so solidly morning and evening that no one could get accustomed to see it. So much water and so much fruit unconnected by anything spirituous, turned his blood into gangrene; while those forced night sweats diminished its strength and impoverished it; and thus his death was caused, as was seen by the opening of his body. The organs were found in such good and healthy condition that there is reason to believe he would have lived beyond his hundredth year. His stomach above all astonished, and also his bowels by their volume and extent, double that of the ordinary, whence it came that he was such a great yet uniform eater. Remedies were not thought of until it was no longer time, because Fagon would never believe him ill, or Madame de Maintenon either; though at the same time she had taken good care to provide for her own retreat in the case of his death. Amidst all this, the King felt his state before they felt it, and said so sometimes to his valets: Fagon always reassured him, but did nothing. The King was contented with what was said to him without being persuaded,

but his friendship for Fagon restrained him, and Madame de Maintenon still more.

On Wednesday, the 14th of August, the King was carried to hear mass for the last time; held the Council of State, ate a meat dinner, and had music in Madame de Maintenon's rooms. He supped in his chamber, where the Court saw him as at his dinner; was with his family a short time in his cabinet, and went to bed a little after ten.

On Thursday, the Festival of the Assumption, he heard mass in his bed. The night had been disturbed and bad. He dined in his bed, the courtiers being present, rose at five and was carried to Madame de Maintenon's, where music was played. He supped and went to bed as on the previous evening. As long as he could sit up he did the same.

On Friday, the 16th of August, the night had been no better; much thirst and drink. The King ordered no one to enter until ten. Mass and dinner in his bed as before; then he was carried to Madame de Maintenon's; he played with the ladies there, and afterwards there was a grand concert.

On Saturday, the 17th of August, the night as the preceding. He held the Finance Council, he being in bed; saw people at his dinner, rose immediately after; gave audience in his cabinet to the General of the order of Sainte-Croix de la Bretonnerie; passed to Madame de Maintenon's, where he worked with the Chancellor. At night, Fagon slept for the first time in his chamber.

Sunday, the 18th of August, passed like the preceding days, Fagon pretended there had been no fever. The King held a Council of State before and after his dinner; worked afterwards upon the fortifications with Pelletier; then passed to Madame de Maintenon's, where there was music.

Monday, the 19th, and Tuesday, the 20th of August, passed much as the previous days, excepting that on the latter the King supped in his dressing-gown, seated in an armchair; and that after this evening he never left his room or dressed himself again. That same day Madame de Saint-Simon, whom I had pressed to return, came back from the waters of Forges. The King, entering after supper into his cabinet, perceived her. He ordered his chair to be stopped; spoke to her very kindly upon her journey and her return; then had himself wheeled on by Bloin into the other cabinet. She was the last Court lady to whom he spoke. I don't count those who were always near him, and who came to him when he could no longer leave his room. Madame de Saint-Simon said to me in the evening that she should not have recognised the King if she had met him anywhere else. Yet she had left Marly for Forges only on the 6th of July.

On Wednesday, the 21st of August, four physicians saw the King, but took care to do nothing except praise Fagon, who gave him cassia. For some days it had been perceived that he ate meat and even bread with difficulty, (though all his life he had eaten but little of the latter, and for some time only the crumb, because he had no teeth). Soup in larger quantity, hash very light, and eggs compensated him; but he ate very sparingly.

On Thursday, the 22nd of August, the King was still worse. He saw four other physicians, who, like the first four, did nothing but admire the learned and admirable treatment of Fagon, who made him take towards evening some Jesuit bark and water and intended to give him at night, ass's milk. This same day, the King ordered the Duc de la Rochefoucauld to bring him his clothes on the morrow, in order that

he might choose which he would wear upon leaving off the mourning he wore for a son of Madame la Duchesse de Lorraine. He had not been able to quit his chamber for some days; he could scarcely eat anything solid; his physician slept in his chamber, and yet he reckoned upon being cured, upon dressing himself again, and wished to choose his dress! In like manner there was the same round of councils, of work, of amusements. So true it is, that men do not wish to die, and dissimulate from themselves the approach of death as long as possible. Meanwhile, let me say, that the state of the King, which nobody was ignorant of, had already changed M. d'Orléans' desert into a crowded city.

Friday, the 23rd of August, the night was as usual, the morning also. The King worked with Père Tellier, who tried, but in vain, to make him fill up several benefices that were vacant; that is to say, Père Tellier wished to dispose of them himself, instead of leaving them to M. le Duc d'Orléans. Let me state at once, that the feebler the King grew the more Père Tellier worried him; so as not to lose such a rich prey, or miss the opportunity of securing fresh creatures for his service. But he could not succeed. The King declared to him that he had enough to render account of to God, without charging himself with this nomination, and forbade him to speak again upon the subject.

On Saturday evening, the 24th of August, he supped in his dressing-gown, in presence of the courtiers, for the last time. I noticed that he could only swallow liquids, and that he was troubled if looked at. He could not finish his supper, and begged the courtiers to pass on, that is to say, go away. He went to bed, where his leg, on which were several black marks, was examined. It had grown worse lately and had given him much pain. He sent for Père Tellier and

made confession. Confusion spread among the doctors at this. Milk, and Jesuit bark and water had been tried and abandoned in turns; now, nobody knew what to try. The doctors admitted that they believed he had had a slow fever ever since Whitsuntide; and excused themselves for doing nothing on the ground that he did not wish for remedies.

On Sunday, the 25th of August, no more mystery was made of the King's danger. Nevertheless, he expressly commanded that nothing should be changed in the usual order of this day (the fête of St. Louis), that is to say, that the drums and the hautboys, assembled beneath his windows, should play their accustomed music as soon as he awoke, and that the twenty-four violins should play in the ante-chamber during his dinner. He worked afterwards with the Chancellor, who wrote, under his dictation, a codicil to his will, Madame de Maintenon being present. She and M. du Maine, who thought incessantly of themselves, did not consider the King had done enough for them by his will; they wished to remedy this by a codicil, which equally showed how enormously they abused the King's weakness in this extremity, and to what an excess ambition may carry us. By this codicil the King submitted all the civil and military household of the young King to the Duc du Maine, and under his orders to Maréchal de Villeroy, who, by this disposition became the sole masters of the person and the dwelling place of the King, and of Paris, by the troops placed in their hands; so that the Regent had not the slightest shadow of authority and was at their mercy; certainly liable to be arrested or worse, any time it should please M. du Maine.

Soon after the Chancellor left the King, Madame de Maintenon, who remained, sent for the ladies; and the musicians came at seven o'clock in the evening. But

the King fell asleep during the conversation of the ladies. He awoke; his brain confused, which frightened them and made them call the doctors. They found his pulse so bad that they did not hesitate to propose to him, his senses having returned, to take the sacrament without delay. Père Tellier was sent for; the musicians who had just prepared their books and their instruments, were dismissed, the ladies also; and in a quarter of an hour from that time, the King made confession to Père Tellier, the Cardinal de Rohan, meanwhile, bringing the Holy Sacrament from the chapel, and sending for the Curé and holy oils. Two of the King's chaplains, summoned by the Cardinal, came, and seven or eight candlesticks were carried by valets. The Cardinal said a word or two to the King upon this great and last action, during which the King appeared very firm, but very penetrated with what he was doing. As soon as he had received Our Saviour and the holy oils, everybody left the chamber except Madame de Maintenon and the Chancellor. Immediately afterwards, and this was rather strange, a kind of book or little tablet was placed upon the bed, the codicil was presented to the King, and at the bottom of it he wrote four or five lines, and restored the document to the Chancellor.

After this, the King sent for M. le Duc d'Orléans, showed him much esteem, friendship, and confidence; but what is terrible with Jesus Christ still upon his lips—the Sacrament he had just received—he assured him, he would find nothing in his will with which he would not feel pleased. Then he recommended to him the state and the person of the future King.

On Monday, the 26th of August, the King called to him the Cardinals de Rohan and de Bissy, protested that he died in the faith, and in submission to the Church, then added, looking at them, that he was sorry

to leave the affairs of the Church as they were; that they knew he had done nothing except what they wished; that it was therefore for them to answer before God for what he had done; that his own conscience was clear, and that he was as an ignorant man who had abandoned himself entirely to them. What a frightful thunderbolt was this to the two Cardinals; for this was an allusion to the terrible constitution they had assisted Père Tellier in forcing upon him. But their calm was superior to all trial. They praised him and said he had done well, and that he might be at ease as to the result.

This same Monday, 26th of August, after the two Cardinals had left the room, the King dined in his bed in the presence of those who were privileged to enter. As the things were being cleared away, he made them approach and addressed to them these words, which were stored up in their memory:—"Gentlemen, I ask your pardon for the bad example I have given you. I have much to thank you for the manner in which you have served me, and for the attachment and fidelity you have always shown for me. I am very sorry I have not done for you all I should have wished to do; bad times have been the cause. I ask for my grandson the same application and the same fidelity you have had for me. He is a child who may experience many reverses. Let your example be one for all my other subjects. Follow the orders my nephew will give you; he is to govern the realm; I hope he will govern it well; I hope also that you will all contribute to keep up union, and that if any one falls away you will aid in bringing him back. I feel that I am moved, and that I move you also. I ask your pardon. Adieu, gentlemen, I hope you will sometimes remember me."

A short time after he called the Maréchal de Villeroy to him, and said he had made him governor of the

Dauphin. He then called to him M. le Duc and M. le Prince de Conti, and recommended to them the advantage of union among princes. Then, hearing women in the cabinet, questioned who were there, and immediately sent word they might enter. Madame la Duchesse de Berry, Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, and the Princesses of the blood forthwith appeared, crying. The King told them they must not cry thus, and said a few friendly words to them, and dismissed them. They retired by the cabinet, weeping and crying very loudly, which caused people to believe outside that the King was dead; and, indeed, the rumour spread to Paris, and even to the provinces.

Some time after the King requested the Duchesse de Ventadour to bring the little Dauphin to him. He made the child approach, and then said to him, before Madame de Maintenon and the few privileged people present, "My child, you are going to be a great king; do not imitate me in the taste I have had for building, or in that I have had for war; try, on the contrary, to be at peace with your neighbours. Render to God what you owe Him; recognise the obligations you are under to Him; make Him honoured by your subjects. Always follow good counsels; try to comfort your people, which I unhappily have not done. Never forget the obligation you owe to Madame de Ventadour. Madame (*addressing her*), let me embrace him (*and while embracing him*), my dear child, I give you my benediction with my whole heart."

As the little Prince was about to be taken off the bed, the King redemanded him, embraced him again, and raising hands and eyes to Heaven, blessed him once more. This spectacle was extremely touching.

On Tuesday, the 27th of August, the King said to Madame de Maintenon, that he had always heard, it was hard to resolve to die; but that as for him, seeing

himself upon the point of death, he did not find this resolution so difficult to form. She replied that it was very hard when we had attachments to creatures, hatred in our hearts, or restitutions to make. "Ah," rejoined the King, "as for restitutions, to nobody in particular do I owe any; but as for those I owe to the realm, I hope in the mercy of God."

The night which followed was very agitated. The King was seen at all moments joining his hands, striking his breast, and was heard repeating the prayers he ordinarily employed.

On Wednesday morning, the 28th of August, he paid a compliment to Madame de Maintenon, which pleased her but little, and to which she replied not one word. He said, that what consoled him in quitting her was that, considering the age she had reached, they must soon meet again!

About seven o'clock in the morning, he saw in the mirror two of his valets at the foot of the bed weeping, and said to them, "Why do you weep? Is it because you thought me immortal? As for me, I have not thought myself so, and you ought, considering my age, to have been prepared to lose me."

A very clownish Provençal rustic heard of the extremity of the King, while on his way from Marseilles to Paris, and came this morning to Versailles with a remedy, which he said would cure the gangrene. The King was so ill, and the doctors so at their wits' ends, that they consented to receive him. Fagon tried to say something, but this rustic, who was named Le Brun, abused him very coarsely, and Fagon, accustomed to abuse others, was confounded. Ten drops of Le Brun's mixture in Alicante wine were therefore given to the King about eleven o'clock in the morning. Some time after he became stronger, but the pulse falling again and becoming bad, another dose

was given to him about four o'clock, to recall him to life, they told him. He replied, taking the mixture, "To life or to death as it shall please God."

Le Brun's remedy was continued. Some one proposed that the King should take some broth. The King replied that it was not broth he wanted, but a confessor, and sent for him. One day, recovering from loss of consciousness, he asked Père Tellier to give him absolution for all his sins. Père Tellier asked him if he suffered much. "No," replied the King, "that's what troubles me: I should like to suffer more for the expiation of my sins."

On Thursday, the 29th of August, he grew a little better; he even ate two little biscuits steeped in wine, with a certain appetite. The news immediately spread abroad that the King was recovering. I went that day to the apartments of M. le Duc d'Orléans, where, during the previous eight days, there had been such a crowd that, speaking exactly, a pin would not have fallen to the ground. Not a soul was there! As soon as the Duke saw me he burst out laughing, and said, I was the first person who had been to see him all the day! And until the evening he was entirely deserted. Such is the world!

In the evening it was known that the King had only recovered for the moment. In giving orders during the day, he called the young Dauphin "the young King." He saw a movement amongst those around him. "Why not?" said he, "that does not trouble me." Towards eight o'clock he took the elixir of the rustic. His brain appeared confused; he himself said he felt very ill. Towards eleven o'clock his leg was examined. The gangrene was found to be in the foot and the knee; the thigh much inflamed. He swooned during this examination. He had perceived with much pain that Madame de Maintenon was no longer near

him. She had in fact gone off on the previous day with very dry eyes to Saint-Cyr, not intending to return. He asked for her several times during the day. Her departure could not be hidden. He sent for her to Saint-Cyr, and she came back in the evening.

Friday, August the 30th, was a bad day preceded by a bad night. The King continually lost his reason. About five o'clock in the evening Madame de Maintenon left him, gave away her furniture to the domestics, and went to Saint-Cyr never to leave it.

On Saturday, the 31st of August, everything went from bad to worse. The gangrene had reached the knee and all the thigh. Towards eleven o'clock at night the King was found to be so ill that the prayers for the dying were said. This restored him to himself. He repeated the prayers in a voice so strong that it rose above all the other voices. At the end he recognised Cardinal de Rohan, and said to him, "These are the last favours of the Church." This was the last man to whom he spoke. He repeated several times, *Nunc et in horâ mortis,* then said, "Oh, my God, come to my aid: hasten to succour me."

These were his last words. All the night he was without consciousness and in a long agony, which finished on Sunday, the 1st September, 1715, at a quarter past eight in the morning, three days before he had accomplished his seventy-seventh year, and in the seventy-second of his reign. He had survived all his sons and grandsons, except the King of Spain. Europe never saw so long a reign or France a King so old.

CHAPTER LXXIII

I SHALL pass over the stormy period of Louis XIV.'s minority. At twenty-three years of age he entered the great world as King, under the most favourable auspices. His ministers were the most skilful in all Europe; his generals the best; his Court was filled with illustrious and clever men, formed during the troubles which had followed the death of Louis XIII.

Louis XIV. was made for a brilliant Court. In the midst of other men, his figure, his courage, his grace, his beauty, his grand mien, even the tone of his voice and the majestic and natural charm of all his person, distinguished him till his death as the King Bee, and showed that if he had only been born a simple private gentlemen, he would equally have excelled in fêtes, pleasures, and gallantry, and would have had the greatest success in love. The intrigues and adventures which early in life he had been engaged in—when the Comtesse de Soissons lodged at the Tuileries, as superintendent of the Queen's household, and was the centre figure of the Court group—had exercised an unfortunate influence upon him: he received those impressions with which he could never after successfully struggle. From this time, intellect, education, nobility of sentiment, and high principle, in others, became objects of suspicion to him, and soon of hatred. The more he advanced in years the more this sentiment was confirmed in him. He wished to reign by himself. His jealousy on this point unceasingly became weakness. He reigned, indeed, in little things; the great he could

never reach: even in the former, too, he was often governed. The superior ability of his early ministers and his early generals soon wearied him. He liked nobody to be in any way superior to him. Thus he chose his ministers, not for their knowledge, but for their ignorance; not for their capacity, but for their want of it. He liked to form them, as he said; liked to teach them even the most trifling things. It was the same with his generals. He took credit to himself for instructing them; wished it to be thought that from his cabinet he commanded and directed all his armies. Naturally fond of trifles, he unceasingly occupied himself with the most petty details of his troops, his household, his mansions; would even instruct his cooks, who received, like novices, lessons they had known by heart for years. This vanity, this unmeasured and unreasonable love of admiration, was his ruin. His ministers, his generals, his mistresses, his courtiers, soon perceived his weakness. They praised him with emulation and spoiled him. Praises, or to say truth, flattery, pleased him to such an extent, that the coarsest was well received, the vilest even better relished. It was the sole means by which you could approach him. Those whom he liked owed his affection for them to their untiring flatteries. This is what gave his ministers so much authority, and the opportunities they had for adulating him, of attributing everything to him, and of pretending to learn everything from him. Suppleness, meanness, an admiring, dependent, cringing manner—above all, an air of nothingness—were the sole means of pleasing him.

This poison spread. It spread, too, to an incredible extent, in a prince who, although of intellect beneath mediocrity, was not utterly without sense, and who had had some experience. Without voice or musical knowledge, he used to sing, in private, the passages of

the opera prologues that were fullest of his praises! He was drowned in vanity; and so deeply, that at his public suppers—all the Court present, musicians also—he would hum these self-same praises between his teeth, when the music they were set to was played!

And yet, it must be admitted, he might have done better. Though his intellect, as I have said, was beneath mediocrity, it was capable of being formed. He loved glory, was fond of order and regularity; was by disposition prudent, moderate, discreet, master of his movements and his tongue. Will it be believed? He was also by disposition good and just! God had sufficiently gifted him to enable him to be a good King; perhaps even *a tolerably great King!* All the evil came to him from elsewhere. His early education was so neglected that nobody dared approach his apartment. He has often been heard to speak of those times with bitterness, and even to relate that, one evening he was found in the basin of the Palais Royal garden fountain, into which he had fallen! He was scarcely taught how to read or write, and remained so ignorant, that the most familiar historical and other facts were utterly unknown to him! He fell, accordingly, and sometimes even in public, into the grossest absurdities.

It was his vanity, his desire for glory, that led him, soon after the death of the King of Spain, to make that event the pretext for war; in spite of the renunciations so recently made, so carefully stipulated, in the marriage contract. He marched into Flanders; his conquests there were rapid; the passage of the Rhine was admirable; the triple alliance of England, Sweden, and Holland only animated him. In the midst of winter he took Franche-Comté, by restoring which at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, he preserved his conquests in Flanders. All was flourishing then in the state. Riches everywhere. Colbert had placed the finances, the navy,

commerce, manufactures, letters even, upon the highest point; and this age, like that of Augustus, produced in abundance illustrious men of all kinds,—even those illustrious only in pleasures.

Le Tellier and Louvois, his son, who had the war department, trembled at the success and at the credit of Colbert, and had no difficulty in putting into the head of the King a new war, the success of which caused such fear to all Europe that France never recovered from it, and after having been upon the point of succumbing to this war, for a long time felt the weight and misfortune of it. Such was the real cause of that famous Dutch war, to which the King allowed himself to be pushed, and which his love for Madame de Montespan rendered so unfortunate for his glory and for his kingdom. Everything being conquered, everything taken, and Amsterdam ready to give up her keys, the King yields to his impatience, quits the army, flies to Versailles, and destroys in an instant all the success of his arms! He repaired this disgrace by a second conquest, in person, of Franche-Comté, which this time was preserved by France.

In 1676, the King having returned into Flanders, took Condé; whilst Monsieur took Bouchain. The armies of the King and of the Prince of Orange approached each other so suddenly and so closely, that they found themselves front to front near Heurtebise. According even to the admission of the enemy, our forces were so superior to those of the Prince of Orange, that we must have gained the victory if we had attacked. But the King, after listening to the opinions of his generals, some for, and some against giving battle, decided for the latter, turned tail, and the engagement was talked of no more. The army was much discontented. Everybody wished for battle. The fault therefore of the King made much impression upon the

troops, and excited cruel railleries against us at home and in the foreign courts. The King stopped but little longer afterwards in the army, although we were only in the month of May. He returned to his mistress.

The following year he returned to Flanders, and took Cambrai; and Monsieur besieged Saint-Omer. Monsieur got the start of the Prince of Orange, who was about to assist the place, gave him battle near Corsel, obtained a complete victory, immediately took Saint-Omer, and then joined the King. This contrast so affected the monarch that never afterwards did he give Monsieur command of an army! External appearances were perfectly kept up, but from that moment the resolution was taken and always well sustained.

The year afterwards the King led in person the siege of Ghent. The peace of Nimeguen ended this year the war with Holland, Spain, &c.; and on the commencement of the following year, that with the Emperor and the Empire. America, Africa, the Archipelago, Sicily, acutely felt the power of France, and in 1684 Luxembourg was the price of the delay of the Spaniards in fulfilling all the conditions of the peace. Genoa, bombarded, was forced to come in the persons of its doge and four of its senators, to sue for peace at the commencement of the following year. From this date, until 1688, the time passed in the cabinet less in fêtes than in devotion and constraint. Here finishes the apogeum of this reign, and the fulness of glory and prosperity. The great captains, the great ministers, were no more, but their pupils remained. The second epoch of the reign was very different from the first; but the third was even more sadly dissimilar.

I have related the adventure which led to the wars of this period; how an ill-made window-frame was noticed at the Trianon, then building; how Louvois

was blamed for it; his alarm lest his disgrace should follow; his determination to engage the King in a war which should turn him from his building fancies. He carried out his resolve: with what result I have already shown. France was ruined at home; and abroad, despite the success of her arms, gained nothing. On the contrary, the withdrawal of the King from Gembloux, when he might have utterly defeated the Prince of Orange, did us infinite harm, as I have shown in its place. The peace which followed this war was disgraceful. The King was obliged to acknowledge the Prince of Orange as King of England, after having so long shown hatred and contempt for him. Our precipitation, too, cost us Luxembourg; and the ignorance of our plenipotentiaries gave our enemies great advantages in forming their frontier. Such was the peace of Ryswick, concluded in September, 1697.

This peace seemed as though it would allow France some breathing time. The King was sixty years of age, and had, in his own opinion, acquired all sorts of glory. But scarcely were we at peace, without having had time to taste it, than the pride of the King made him wish to astonish all Europe by the display of a power that it believed prostrated. And truly he did astonish Europe. But at what a cost! The famous camp of Compiègne—for 'tis to that I allude—was one of the most magnificent spectacles ever seen; but its immense and misplaced prodigality was soon regretted. Twenty years afterwards, some of the regiments who took part in it were still in difficulties from this cause.

Shortly afterwards, by one of the most surprising and unheard-of pieces of good fortune, the crown of Spain fell into the hands of the Duc d'Anjou, grandson of the King. It seemed as though golden days had come back again to France. Only for a little time, however, did it seem so. Nearly all Europe, as it has

been seen, banded against France, to dispute the Spanish crown. The King had lost all his good ministers, all his able generals, and had taken good pains they should leave no successors. When war came, then, we were utterly unable to prosecute it with success or honour. We were driven out of Germany, of Italy, of the Low Countries. We could not sustain the war, or resolve to make peace. Every day led us nearer and nearer the brink of the precipice, the terrible depths of which were for ever staring us in the face. A misunderstanding amongst our enemies, whereby England became detached from the grand alliance; the undue contempt of Prince Eugène for our generals, out of which arose the battle of Denain; saved us from the gulf. Peace came, and a peace, too, infinitely better than that we should have ardently embraced if our enemies had agreed amongst themselves beforehand. Nevertheless, this peace cost dear to France, and cost Spain half its territory—Spain, of which the King had said not even a windmill would he yield! But this was another piece of folly he soon repented of.

Thus, we see this monarch, grand, rich, conquering, the arbiter of Europe; feared and admired as long as the ministers and captains existed who really deserved the name. When they were no more, the machine kept moving some time by impulsion, and from their influence. But soon afterwards we saw beneath the surface; faults and errors were multiplied, and decay came on with giant strides; without, however, opening the eyes of that despotic master, so anxious to do everything and direct everything himself, and who seemed to indemnify himself for disdain abroad by increasing fear and trembling at home.

So much for the reign of this vain-glorious monarch.

Let me touch now upon some other incidents in his career, and upon some points in his character.

He early showed a disinclination for Paris. The troubles that had taken place there during his minority made him regard the place as dangerous; he wished, too, to render himself venerable by hiding himself from the eyes of the multitude; all these considerations fixed him at Saint-Germain soon after the death of the Queen, his mother. It was to that place he began to attract the world by fêtes and gallantries, and by making it felt that he wished to be often seen.

His love for Madame de la Vallière, which was at first kept secret, occasioned frequent excursions to Versailles, then a little card castle, which had been built by Louis XIII.—annoyed, and his suite still more so, at being frequently obliged to sleep in a wretched inn there, after he had been out hunting in the forest of Saint Leger. That monarch rarely slept at Versailles more than one night, and then from necessity; the King, his son, slept there, so that he might be more in private with his mistress, pleasures unknown to the hero and just man, worthy son of Saint-Louis, who built the little château.

These excursions of Louis XIV. by degrees gave birth to those immense buildings he erected at Versailles; and their convenience for a numerous court, so different from the apartments at Saint-Germain, led him to take up his abode there entirely shortly after the death of the Queen. He built an infinite number of apartments, which were asked for by those who wished to pay their court to him; whereas at Saint-Germain nearly everybody was obliged to lodge in the town, and the few who found accommodation at the château were strangely inconvenienced.

The frequent fêtes, the private promenades at Versailles, the journeys, were means on which the King seized in order to distinguish or mortify the courtiers, and thus render them more assiduous in pleasing him.

He felt that of real favours he had not enough to bestow; in order to keep up the spirit of devotion, he therefore unceasingly invented all sorts of ideal ones, little preferences and petty distinctions, which answered his purpose as well.

He was exceedingly jealous of the attention paid him. Not only did he notice the presence of the most distinguished courtiers, but those of inferior degree also. He looked to the right and to the left, not only upon rising but upon going to bed, at his meals, in passing through his apartments, or his gardens of Versailles, where alone the courtiers were allowed to follow him; he saw and noticed everybody; not one escaped him, not even those who hoped to remain unnoticed. He marked well all absentees from the Court, found out the reason of their absence, and never lost an opportunity of acting towards them as the occasion might seem to justify. With some of the courtiers (the most distinguished), it was a demerit not to make the Court their ordinary abode; with others 'twas a fault to come but rarely; for those who never or scarcely ever came it was certain disgrace. When their names were in any way mentioned, "I do not know them," the King would reply haughtily. Those who presented themselves but seldom were thus characterised: "They are people I never see;" these decrees were irrevocable. He could not bear people who liked Paris.

Louis XIV. took great pains to be well informed of all that passed everywhere; in the public places, in the private houses, in society and familiar intercourse. His spies and tell-tales were infinite. He had them of all species; many who were ignorant that their information reached him; others who knew it; others who wrote to him direct, sending their letters through channels he indicated; and all these letters were seen by

him alone, and always before everything else; others who sometimes spoke to him secretly in his cabinet, entering by the back stairs. These unknown means ruined an infinite number of people of all classes, who never could discover the cause; often ruined them very unjustly; for the King, once prejudiced, never altered his opinion, or so rarely, that nothing was more rare. He had, too, another fault, very dangerous for others and often for himself, since it deprived him of good subjects. He had an excellent memory; in this way, that if he saw a man who, twenty years before, perhaps, had in some manner offended him, he did not forget the man, though he might forget the offence. This was enough, however, to exclude the person from all favour. The representations of a minister, of a general, of his confessor even, could not move the King. He would not yield.

The most cruel means by which the King was informed of what was passing—for many years before anybody knew it—was that of opening letters. The promptitude and dexterity with which they were opened passes understanding. He saw extracts from all the letters in which there were passages that the chiefs of the post-office, and then the minister who governed it, thought ought to go before him; entire letters, too, were sent to him, when their contents seemed to justify the sending. Thus the chiefs of the post, nay, the principal clerks were in a position to suppose what they pleased and against whom they pleased. A word of contempt against the King or the government, a joke, a detached phrase, was enough. It is incredible how many people, justly or unjustly, were more or less ruined, always without resource, without trial, and without knowing why. The secret was impenetrable; for nothing ever cost the King less than profound silence and dissimulation.

This last talent he pushed almost to falsehood, but never to deceit, pluming himself upon keeping his word,—therefore he scarcely ever gave it. The secrets of others he kept as religiously as his own. He was even flattered by certain confessions and certain confidences; and there was no mistress, minister, or favourite, who could have wormed them out, even though the secret regarded themselves.

We know, amongst many others, the famous story of a woman of quality, who, after having been separated a year from her husband, found herself in the family way just as he was on the point of returning from the army, and who, not knowing what else to do, in the most urgent manner begged a private interview of the King. She obtained it, and confided to him her position, as to the worthiest man in his realm, as she said. The King counselled her to profit by her distress, and live more wisely for the future, and immediately promised to retain her husband on the frontier as long as was necessary, and to forbid his return under any pretext, and in fact he gave orders the same day to Louvois, and prohibited the husband not only all leave of absence, but forbade him to quit for a single day the post he was to command all the winter. The officer, who was distinguished, and who had neither wished nor asked to be employed all the winter upon the frontier, and Louvois, who had in no way thought of it, were equally surprised and vexed. They were obliged, however, to obey to the letter, and without asking why; and the King never mentioned the circumstance until many years afterwards, when he was quite sure nobody could find out either husband or wife, as in fact they never could, or even obtain the most vague or the most uncertain suspicion.

CHAPTER LXXIV

NEVER did man give with better grace than Louis XIV., or augmented so much, in this way, the price of his benefits. Never did man sell to better profit his words, even his smiles,—nay, his looks. Never did disobliging words escape him; and if he had to blame, to reprimand, or correct, which was very rare, it was nearly always with goodness, never, except on one occasion (the admonition of Courtenvaux, related in its place), with anger or severity. Never was man so naturally polite, or of a politeness so measured, so graduated, so adapted to person, time, and place. Towards women his politeness was without parallel. Never did he pass the humblest petticoat without raising his hat; even to chambermaids, that he knew to be such, as often happened at Marly. For ladies he took his hat off completely, but to a greater or less extent; for titled people, half off, holding it in his hand or against his ear some instants, more or less marked. For the nobility he contented himself by putting his hand to his hat. He took it off for the Princes of the blood, as for the ladies. If he accosted ladies he did not cover himself until he had quitted them. All this was out of doors, for in the house he was never covered. His reverences, more or less marked, but always light, were incomparable for their grace and manner; even his mode of half raising himself at supper for each lady who arrived at table. Though at last this fatigued him, yet he never ceased it; the ladies who were to sit down, however, took care not to enter after supper had commenced.

If he was made to wait for anything while dressing, it was always with patience. He was exact to the hours that he gave for all his day, with a precision clear and brief in his orders. If in the bad weather of winter, when he could not go out, he went to Madame de Maintenon's a quarter of an hour earlier than he had arranged (which seldom happened), and the captain of the guards was not on duty, he did not fail afterwards to say that it was his own fault for anticipating the hour, not that of the captain of the guards for being absent. Thus, with this regularity which he never deviated from, he was served with the utmost exactitude.

He treated his valets well, above all those of the household. It was amongst them that he felt most at ease, and that he unbosomed himself the most familiarly, especially to the chiefs. Their friendship and their aversion have often had grand results. They were unceasingly in a position to render good and bad offices: thus they recalled those powerful enfranchised slaves of the Roman emperors, to whom the senate and the great people paid court and basely truckled. These valets during Louis XIV.'s reign were not less courted. The ministers, even the most powerful, openly studied their caprices; and the Princes of the blood,—nay, the bastards,—not to mention people of lower grade, did the same. The majority were accordingly insolent enough; and if you could not avoid their insolence, you were forced to put up with it.

The King loved air and exercise very much, as long as he could make use of them. He had excelled in dancing, and at tennis and mall. On horseback he was admirable, even at a late age. He liked to see everything done with grace and address. To acquit yourself well or ill before him was a merit or a fault. He

said that with things not necessary it was best not to meddle, unless they were done well. He was very fond of shooting, and there was not a better or more graceful shot than he. He had always in his cabinet seven or eight pointer bitches, and was fond of feeding them, to make himself known to them. He was very fond, too, of stag hunting; but in a *calèche,* since he broke his arm, while hunting at Fontainebleau, immediately after the death of the Queen. He rode alone in a species of "box," drawn by four little horses—with five or six relays, and drove himself with an address and acçuracy unknown to the best coachmen. His postilions were children from ten to fifteen years of age, and he directed them.

He liked splendour, magnificence, and profusion in everything: you pleased him if you shone through the brilliancy of your houses, your clothes, your table, your equipages. Thus a taste for extravagance and luxury was disseminated through all classes of society; causing infinite harm, and leading to general confusion of rank and to ruin.

As for the King himself, nobody ever approached his magnificence. His buildings, who could number them? At the same time, who was there who did not deplore the pride, the caprice, the bad taste seen in them? He built nothing useful or ornamental in Paris, except the Pont Royal, and that simply by necessity; so that despite its incomparable extent, Paris is inferior to many cities of Europe. Saint-Germain, a lovely spot, with a marvellous view, rich forest, terraces, gardens, and water he abandoned for Versailles; the dullest and most ungrateful of all places, without prospect, without wood, without water, without soil; for the ground is all shifting sand or swamp, the air accordingly bad.

But he liked to subjugate nature by art and treasure.

He built at Versailles, on, on, without any general design, the beautiful and the ugly, the vast and the mean, all jumbled together. His own apartments and those of the Queen, are inconvenient to the last degree, dull, close, stinking. The gardens astonish by their magnificence, but cause regret by their bad taste. You are introduced to the freshness of the shade only by a vast torrid zone, at the end of which there is nothing for you but to mount or descend; and with the hill, which is very short, terminate the gardens. The violence everywhere done to nature repels and wearies us despite ourselves. The abundance of water, forced up and gathered together from all parts, is rendered green, thick, muddy; it disseminates humidity, unhealthy and evident; and an odour still more so. I might never finish upon the monstrous defects of a palace so immense and so immensely dear, with its accompaniments, which are still more so.

But the supply of water for the fountains was all defective at all moments, in spite of those seas of reservoirs which had cost so many millions to establish and to form upon the shifting sand and marsh. Who could have believed it? This defect became the ruin of the infantry which was turned out to do the work. Madame de Maintenon reigned. M. de Louvois was well with her, then. We were at peace. He conceived the idea of turning the river Eure between Chartres and Maintenon, and of making it come to Versailles. Who can say what gold and men this obstinate attempt cost during several years, until it was prohibited by the heaviest penalties, in the camp established there, and for a long time kept up; not to speak of the sick,—above all, of the dead,—that the hard labour and still more the much disturbed earth, caused? How many men were years in recovering from the effects of the contagion! How many never regained their health

at all! And not only the sub-officers, but the colonels, the brigadiers and general officers, were compelled to be upon the spot, and were not at liberty to absent themselves a quarter of an hour from the works. The war at last interrupted them in 1688, and they have never since been undertaken; only unfinished portions of them exist which will immortalise this cruel folly.

At last, the King, tired of the cost and bustle, persuaded himself that he should like something little and solitary. He searched all around Versailles for some place to satisfy this new taste. He examined several neighbourhoods, he traversed the hills near Saint-Germain, and the vast plain which is at the bottom, where the Seine winds and bathes the feet of so many towns, and so many treasures in quitting Paris. He was pressed to fix himself at Lucienne, where Cavoye afterwards had a house, the view from which is enchanting; but he replied that, that fine situation would ruin him, and that as he wished to go to no expense, so he also wished a situation which would not urge him into any. He found behind Lucienne a deep narrow valley, completely shut in, inaccessible from its swamps, and with a wretched village called Marly upon the slope of one of its hills. This closeness, without drain or the means of having any, was the sole merit of the valley. The King was overjoyed at his discovery. It was a great work, that of draining this sewer of all the environs, which threw there their garbage, and of bringing soil thither! The hermitage was made. At first, it was only for sleeping in three nights, from Wednesday to Saturday, two or three times a-year, with a dozen at the outside of courtiers, to fill the most indispensable posts.

By degrees, the hermitage was augmented, the hills were pared and cut down, to give at least the semblance of a prospect; in fine, what with buildings, gar-

dens, waters, aqueducts, the curious and well known machine, statues, precious furniture, the park, the ornamental enclosed forest,—Marly has become what it is to-day, though it has been stripped since the death of the King. Great trees were unceasingly brought from Compiègne or farther, three-fourths of which died and were immediately after replaced; vast spaces covered with thick wood, or obscure alleys, were suddenly changed into immense pieces of water, on which people were rowed in gondolas; then they were changed again into forest (I speak of what I have seen in six weeks); basins were changed a hundred times; cascades the same; carp ponds adorned with the most exquisite painting, scarcely finished, were changed and differently arranged by the same hands; and this an infinite number of times; then there was that prodigious machine just alluded to, with its immense aqueducts, the conduit, its monstrous resources solely devoted to Marly, and no longer to Versailles; so that I am under the mark in saying that Versailles, even, did not cost so much as Marly.

Such was the fate of a place the abode of serpents, and of carrion, of toads and frogs, solely chosen to avoid expense. Such was the bad taste of the King in all things, and his proud haughty pleasure in forcing nature; which neither the most mighty war, nor devotion could subdue!

CHAPTER LXXV

LET me now speak of the amours of the King which were even more fatal to the state than his building mania. Their scandal filled all Europe, stupefied France, shook the state, and without doubt drew upon the King those maledictions under the weight of which he was pushed so near the very edge of the precipice, and had the misfortune of seeing his legitimate posterity within an ace of extinction in France. These are evils which became veritable catastrophes and which will be long felt.

Louis XIV., in his youth more made for love than any of his subjects—being tired of gathering passing sweets, fixed himself at last upon La Vallière. The progress and the result of his love are well known.

Madame de Montespan was she whose rare beauty touched him next, even during the reign of Madame de La Vallière. She soon perceived it, and vainly pressed her husband to carry her away into Guienne. With foolish confidence he refused to listen to her. She spoke to him more in earnest. In vain. At last the King was listened to, and carried her off from her husband, with that frightful hubbub which resounded with horror among all nations, and which gave to the world the new spectacle of two mistresses at once! The King took them to the frontiers, to the camps, to the armies, both of them in the Queen's coach. The people ran from all parts to look at the three queens; and asked one another in their simplicity if they had seen them. In the end, Madame de Montespan triumphed, and disposed of the master and his Court with an éclat that

knew no veil; and in order that nothing should be wanting to complete the licence of this life, M. de Montespan was sent to the Bastille; then banished to Guienne, and his wife was appointed superintendent of the Queen's household.

The accouchements of Madame de Montespan were public. Her circle became the centre of the Court, of the amusements, of the hopes and of the fears of ministers and the generals, and the humiliation of all France. It was also the centre of wit, and of a kind so peculiar, so delicate, and so subtle, but always so natural and so agreeable, that it made itself distinguished by its special character.

Madame de Montespan was cross, capricious, ill-tempered, and of a haughtiness in everything which reached to the clouds, and from the effects of which nobody, not even the King, was exempt. The courtiers avoided passing under her windows, above all when the King was with her. They used to say it was equivalent to being put to the sword, and this phrase became proverbial at the Court. It is true that she spared nobody, often without other design than to divert the King; and as she had infinite wit and sharp pleasantry, nothing was more dangerous than the ridicule she, better than anybody, could cast on all. With that she loved her family and her relatives, and did not fail to serve people for whom she conceived friendship. The Queen endured with difficulty her haughtiness—very different from the respect and measure with which she had been treated by the Duchesse de la Vallière, whom she always loved; whereas of Madame de Montespan she would say, "That strumpet will cause my death." The retirement, the austere penitence, and the pious end of Madame de Montespan have been already described.

During her reign she did not fail to have causes for

jealousy. There was Mademoiselle de Fontange, who pleased the King sufficiently to become his mistress. But she had no intellect, and without that it was impossible to maintain supremacy over the King. Her early death quickly put an end to this amour. Then there was Madame de Soubise, who, by the infamous connivance of her husband, prostituted herself to the King, and thus secured all sorts of advantages for that husband, for herself, and for her children. The love of the King for her continued until her death, although for many years before that he had ceased to see her in private. Then there was the beautiful Ludre, demoiselle of Lorraine, and maid of honour to Madame, who was openly loved for a moment. But this amour was a flash of lightning, and Madame de Montespan remained triumphant.

Let us now pass to another kind of amour which astonished all the world as much as the other had scandalised it, and which the King carried with him to the tomb. Who does not already recognise the celebrated Françoise d'Aubigné, Marquise de Maintenon, whose permanent reign did not last less than thirty-two years?

Born in the American islands, where her father, perhaps a gentleman, had gone to seek his bread, and where he was stifled by obscurity, she returned alone and at haphazard into France. She landed at La Rochelle, and was received in pity by Madame de Neuillant, mother of the Maréchale Duchesse de Navailles, and was reduced by that avaricious old woman to keep the keys of her granary, and to see the hay measured out to her horses, as I have already related elsewhere. She came afterwards to Paris, young, clever, witty, and beautiful, without friends and without money; and by lucky chance made acquaintance with the famous Scarron. He found her amiable; his friends

perhaps still more so. Marriage with this joyous and learned cripple appeared to her the greatest and most unlooked-for good fortune; and folks who were, perhaps, more in want of a wife than he, persuaded him to marry her, and thus raise this charming unfortunate from her misery.

The marriage being brought about, the new spouse pleased the company which went to Scarron's house. It was the fashion to go there: people of the Court and of the city, the best and most distinguished went. Scarron was not in a state to leave his house, but the charm of his genius, of his knowledge, of his imagination, of that incomparable and ever fresh gaiety which he showed in the midst of his afflictions, that rare fecundity, and that humour, tempered by so much good taste that is still admired in his writings, drew everybody there.

Madame Scarron made at home all sorts of acquaintances, which, however, at the death of her husband, did not keep her from being reduced to the charity of the parish of Saint-Eustace. She took a chamber for herself and for a servant, where she lived in a very pinched manner. Her personal charms by degrees improved her condition. Villars, father of the Maréchal; Beuvron, father of D'Harcourt; the three Villarceaux, and many others kept her.

This set her afloat again, and, step by step, introduced her to the Hôtel d'Albret, and thence to the Hôtel de Richelieu, and elsewhere; so she passed from one house to the other. In these houses Madame Scarron was far from being on the footing of the rest of the company. She was more like a servant than a guest. She was completely at the beck and call of her hosts; now to ask for firewood; now if a meal was nearly ready; another time if the coach of so-and-so or such a one had returned; and so on, with a

thousand little commissions which the use of bells, introduced a long time after, differently disposes of.

It was in these houses, principally in the Hôtel de Richelieu, much more still in the Hôtel d'Albret, where the Maréchal d'Albret lived in great state, that Madame Scarron made the majority of her acquaintances. The Maréchal was cousin-german of M. de Montespan, very intimate with him, and with Madame de Montespan. When she became the King's mistress he became her counsellor, and abandoned her husband.

To the intimacy between the Maréchal d'Albret and Madame de Montespan, Madame de Maintenon owed the good fortune she met with fourteen or fifteen years later. Madame de Montespan continually visited the Hôtel d'Albret, and was much impressed with Madame Scarron. She conceived a friendship for the obliging widow, and when she had her first children by the King—M. du Maine and Madame la Duchesse, whom the King wished to conceal—she proposed that they should be confided to Madame Scarron. A house in the Marais was accordingly given to her, to lodge in with them, and the means to bring them up, but in the utmost secrecy. Afterwards, these children were taken to Madame de Montespan, then shown to the King, and then by degrees drawn from secrecy and avowed. Their governess, being established with them at the Court, more and more pleased Madame de Montespan, who several times made the King give presents to her. He, on the other hand, could not endure her; what he gave to her, always little, was by excess of complaisance and with a regret that he did not hide.

The estate of Maintenon being for sale, Madame de Montespan did not let the King rest until she had drawn from him enough to buy it for Madame Scarron, who thenceforth assumed its name. She obtained

enough also for the repair of the château, and then attacked the King for means to arrange the garden, which the former owners had allowed to go to ruin.

It was at the toilette of Madame de Montespan that these demands were made. The captain of the guards alone followed the King there. M. le Maréchal de Lorges, the truest man that ever lived, held that post then, and he has often related to me the scene he witnessed. The King at first turned a deaf ear to the request of Madame de Montespan, and then refused. Annoyed that she still insisted, he said he had already done more than enough for this creature; that he could not understand the fancy of Madame de Montespan for her, and her obstinacy in keeping her after he had begged her so many times to dismiss her; that he admitted Madame Scarron was insupportable to him, and provided he never saw her more and never heard speak of her, he would open his purse again, though, to say truth, he had already given too much to a creature of this kind! Never did M. le Maréchal de Lorges forget these words; and he has always repeated them to me and others precisely as they are given here, so struck was he with them, and much more after all that he saw since, so astonishing and so contradictory. Madame de Montespan stopped short, very much troubled by having too far pressed the King.

M. du Maine was extremely lame; this was caused, it was said, by a fall he had from his nurse's arms. Nothing done for him succeeded; the resolution was then taken to send him to various practicians in Flanders, and elsewhere in the realm, then to the waters, among others to Barèges. The letters that the governess wrote to Madame de Montespan, giving an account of these journeys, were shown to the King. He

thought them well written, relished them, and the last ones made his aversion for the writer diminish.

The ill-humour of Madame de Montespan finished the work. She had a good deal of that quality, and had become accustomed to give it full swing. The King was the object of it more frequently than anybody; he was still amorous; but her ill-humour pained him. Madame de Maintenon reproached Madame de Montespan for this, and thus advanced herself in the King's favour. The King, by degrees, grew accustomed to speak sometimes to Madame de Maintenon; to unbosom to her what he wished her to say to Madame de Montespan; at last to relate to her the chagrin this latter caused him, and to consult her thereupon.

Admitted thus into the intimate confidence of the lover and the mistress, and this by the King's own doing, the adroit waiting-woman knew how to cultivate it, and profited so well by her industry that by degrees she supplanted Madame de Montespan, who perceived, too late, that her friend had become necessary to the King. Arrived at this point, Madame de Maintenon made, in her turn, complaints to the King of all she had to suffer, from a mistress who spared even him so little; and by dint of these mutual complaints about Madame de Montespan, Madame de Maintenon at last took her place, and knew well how to keep it.

Fortune, I dare not say Providence, which was preparing for the haughtiest of kings, humiliation the most profound, the most public, the most durable, the most unheard-of, strengthened more and more his taste for this woman, so adroit and expert at her trade; while the continued ill-humour and jealousy of Madame de Montespan rendered the new union still more solid. It was this that Madame de Sévigné so prettily paints, enigmatically, in her letters to Madame de

Grignan, in which she sometimes talks of these Court movements; for Madame de Maintenon had been in Paris in the society of Madame de Sévigné, of Madame de Coulange, of Madame de La Fayette, and had begun to make them feel her importance. Charming touches are to be seen in the same style upon the favour, veiled but brilliant enjoyed by Madame de Soubise.

It was while the King was in the midst of his partiality for Madame de Maintenon that the Queen died. It was at the same time, too, that the ill-humour of Madame de Montespan became more and more insupportable. This imperious beauty, accustomed to domineer and to be adored, could not struggle against the despair which the prospect of her fall caused her. What carried her beyond all bounds, was that she could no longer disguise from herself, that she had an abject rival whom she had supported, who owed everything to her; whom she had so much liked that she had several times refused to dismiss her when pressed to do so by the King; a rival, too, so beneath her in beauty, and older by several years; to feel that it was this lady's-maid, not to say this servant, that the King most frequently went to see; that he sought only her; that he could not dissimulate his uneasiness if he did not find her; that he quitted all for her; in fine, that at all moments she (Madame de Montespan) needed the intervention of Madame de Maintenon, in order to attract the King to reconcile her with him, or to obtain the favours she asked for. It was then, in times so propitious to the enchantress, that the King became free by the death of the Queen.

He passed the first few days at Saint-Cloud, at Monsieur's, whence he went to Fontainebleau, where he spent all the autumn. It was there that his liking, stimulated by absence, made him find that absence insupportable. Upon his return it is pretended—for

we must distinguish the certain from that which is not so—it is pretended, I say, that the King spoke more freely to Madame de Maintenon, and that she, venturing to put forth her strength, intrenched herself behind devotion and prudery; that the King did not cease, that she preached to him and made him afraid of the devil, and that she balanced his love against his conscience with so much art, that she succeeded in becoming what our eyes have seen her, but what posterity will never believe she was.

But what is very certain and very true, is, that some time after the return of the King from Fontainebleau, and in the midst of the winter that followed the death of the Queen (posterity will with difficulty believe it, although perfectly true and proved), Père de la Chaise, confessor of the King, said mass at the dead of night in one of the King's cabinets at Versailles. Bontems, governor of Versailles, chief valet on duty, and the most confidential of the four, was present at this mass, at which the monarch and La Maintenon were married in presence of Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, as diocesan, of Louvois (both of whom drew from the King a promise that he would never declare this marriage), and of Montchevreuil. This last was a relative and friend of Villarceaux, to whom during the summer he lent his house at Montchevreuil, remaining there himself, however, with his wife; and in that house Villarceaux kept Madame Scarron, paying all the expenses because his relative was poor, and because he (Villarceaux) was ashamed to take her to his own home, to live in concubinage with her in the presence of his wife whose patience and virtue he respected.

The satiety of the honeymoon, usually so fatal, and especially the honeymoon of such marriages, only consolidated the favour of Madame de Maintenon. Soon

after, she astonished everybody by the apartments given to her at Versailles, at the top of the grand staircase facing those of the King and on the same floor. From that moment the King always passed some hours with her every day of his life; wherever she might be she was always lodged near him, and on the same floor if possible.

What manner of person she was,—this incredible enchantress,—and how she governed all-powerfully for more than thirty years, it behoves me now to explain!

CHAPTER LXXVI

MADAME DE MAINTENON was a woman of much wit, which the good company, in which she had at first been merely suffered, but in which she soon shone, had much polished; and ornamented with knowledge of the world, and which gallantry had rendered of the most agreeable kind. The various positions she had held had rendered her flattering, insinuating, complaisant, always seeking to please. The need she had of intrigues, those she had seen of all kinds, and been mixed up in for herself and for others, had given her the taste, the ability, and the habit of them. Incomparable grace, an easy manner, and yet measured and respectful, which, in consequence of her long obscurity, had become natural to her, marvellously aided her talents; with language gentle, exact, well expressed, and naturally eloquent and brief. Her best time, for she was three or four years older than the King, had been the dainty phrase period,—the superfine gallantry days,—in a word, the time of the "ruelles," as it was called; and it had so influenced her that she always retained evidences of it. She put on afterwards an air of importance, but this gradually gave place to one of devoutness that she wore admirably. She was not absolutely false by disposition, but necessity had made her so, and her natural flightiness made her appear twice as false as she was.

The distress and poverty in which she had so long lived had narrowed her mind, and abased her heart and her sentiments. Her feelings and her thoughts were

so circumscribed, that she was in truth always less even than Madame Scarron, and in everything and everywhere she found herself such. Nothing was more repelling than this meanness, joined to a situation so radiant.

Her flightiness or inconstancy was of the most dangerous kind. With the exception of some of her old friends, to whom she had good reasons for remaining faithful, she favoured people one moment only to cast them off the next. You were admitted to an audience with her for instance, you pleased her in some manner, and forthwith she unbosomed herself to you as though you had known her from childhood. At the second audience you found her dry, laconic, cold. You racked your brains to discover the cause of this change. Mere loss of time!—Flightiness was the sole reason of it.

Devoutness was her strong point; by that she governed and held her place. She found a King who believed himself an apostle, because he had all his life persecuted Jansenism, or what was presented to him as such. This indicated to her with what grain she could sow the field most profitably.

The profound ignorance in which the King had been educated and kept all his life, rendered him from the first an easy prey to the Jesuits. He became even more so with years, when he grew devout, for he was devout with the grossest ignorance. Religion became his weak point. In this state it was easy to persuade him that a decisive and tremendous blow struck against the Protestants would give his name more grandeur than any of his ancestors had acquired, besides strengthening his power and increasing his authority. Madame de Maintenon was one of those who did most to make him believe this.

The revocation of the edict of Nantes, without the

slightest pretext or necessity, and the various proscriptions that followed it, were the fruits of a frightful plot, in which the new spouse was one of the chief conspirators, and which depopulated a quarter of the realm, ruined its commerce, weakened it in every direction, gave it up for a long time to the public and avowed pillage of the dragoons, authorised torments and punishments by which so many innocent people of both sexes were killed by thousands; ruined a numerous class; tore in pieces a world of families; armed relatives against relatives, so as to seize their property and leave them to die of hunger; banished our manufactures to foreign lands, made those lands flourish and overflow at the expense of France, and enabled them to build new cities; gave to the world the spectacle of a prodigious population proscribed, stripped, fugitive, wandering, without crime, and seeking shelter far from its country; sent to the galleys, nobles, rich old men, people much esteemed for their piety, learning, and virtue, people well off, weak, delicate, and solely on account of religion; in fact, to heap up the measure of horror, filled all the realm with perjury and sacrilege, in the midst of the echoed cries of these unfortunate victims of error, while so many others sacrificed their conscience to their wealth and their repose, and purchased both by simulated abjuration, from which without pause they were dragged to adore what they did not believe in, and to receive the divine body of the Saint of Saints whilst remaining persuaded that they were only eating bread which they ought to abhor! Such was the general abomination born of flattery and cruelty. From torture to abjuration, and from that to the communion, there was often only twenty-four hours' distance; and executioners were the conductors of the converts and their witnesses. Those who in the end appeared to have been recon-

ciled, more at leisure did not fail by their flight, or their behaviour, to contradict their pretended conversion.

The King received from all sides news and details of these persecutions and of these conversions. It was by thousands that those who had abjured and taken the communion were counted; ten thousand in one place; six thousand in another—all at once and instantly. The King congratulated himself on his power and his piety. He believed himself to have renewed the days of the preaching of the Apostles, and attributed to himself all the honour. The bishops wrote panegyrics of him, the Jesuits made the pulpit resound with his praises. All France was filled with horror and confusion; and yet there never was so much triumph and joy—never such profusion of laudations! The monarch doubted not of the sincerity of this crowd of conversions; the converters took good care to persuade him of it and to beatify him beforehand. He swallowed their poison in long draughts. He had never yet believed himself so great in the eyes of man, or so advanced in the eyes of God, in the reparation of his sins and of the scandals of his life. He heard nothing but eulogies, while the good and true Catholics and the true bishops, groaned in spirit to see the orthodox act towards error and heretics as heretical tyrants and heathens had acted against the truth, the confessors, and the martyrs. They could not, above all, endure this immensity of perjury and sacrilege. They bitterly lamented the durable and irremediable odium that detestable measure cast upon the true religion, whilst our neighbours, exulting to see us thus weaken and destroy ourselves, profited by our madness, and built designs upon the hatred we should draw upon ourselves from all the Protestant powers.

But to these speaking truths, the King was inacces-

sible. Even the conduct of Rome in this matter, could not open his eyes. That Court which formerly had not been ashamed to extol the Saint-Bartholomew, to thank God for it by public processions, to employ the greatest masters to paint this execrable action in the Vatican; Rome, I say, would not give the slightest approbation to this onslaught on the Huguenots.

The magnificent establishment of Saint-Cyr, followed closely upon the revocation of the edict of Nantes. Madame de Montespan had founded at Paris an establishment for the instruction of young girls in all sorts of fine and ornamental work. Emulation gave Madame de Maintenon higher and vaster views which, whilst gratifying the poor nobility, would cause her to be regarded as protectress in whom all the nobility would feel interested. She hoped to smooth the way for a declaration of her marriage, by rendering herself illustrious by a monument with which she could amuse both the King and herself, and which might serve her as a retreat if she had the misfortune to lose him, as in fact it happened.

This declaration of her marriage was always her most ardent desire. She wished above all things to be proclaimed Queen; and never lost sight of the idea. Once she was near indeed upon seeing it gratified. The King had actually given her his word, that she should be declared; and the ceremony was forthwith about to take place. But it was postponed, and for ever, by the representations of Louvois to the King. To this interference that minister owed his fall, and under circumstances so surprising and so strange, that I cannot do better, I think, than introduce an account of them here, by way of episode. They are all the more interesting because they show what an unlimited power Madame de Maintenon exercised by subterranean means, and with what patient perseverance she under-

mined her enemies when once she had resolved to destroy them.

Louvois had gained the confidence of the King to such an extent, that he was, as I have said, one of the two witnesses of the frightful marriage of his Majesty with Madame de Maintenon. He had the courage to show he was worthy of this confidence, by representing to the King the ignominy of declaring that marriage, and drew from him his word, that never in his life would he do so.

Several years afterwards, Louvois, who took care to be well informed of all that passed in the palace, found out that Madame de Maintenon had been again scheming in order to be declared Queen; that the King had had the weakness to promise she should be, and that the declaration was about to be made. He put some papers in his hand, and at once went straight to the King, who was in a very private room. Seeing Louvois at an unexpected hour, he asked him what brought him there. "Something pressing and important," replied Louvois, with a sad manner that astonished the King, and induced him to command the valets present to quit the room. They went away in fact, but left the door open, so that they could hear all, and see all, too, by the glass. This was the great danger of the cabinets.

The valets being gone, Louvois did not dissimulate from the King his mission. The monarch was often false, but incapable of rising above his own falsehood. Surprised at being discovered, he tried to shuffle out of the matter, and pressed by his minister, began to move so as to gain the other cabinet where the valets were, and thus deliver himself from this hobble. But Louvois, who perceived what he was about, threw himself on his knees and stopped him, drew from his side a little sword he wore, presented the handle to

the King, and prayed him to kill him on the spot, if he would persist in declaring his marriage, in breaking his word, and covering himself in the eyes of Europe with infamy. The King stamped, fumed, told Louvois to let him go. But Louvois squeezed him tighter by the legs for fear he should escape; represented to him the shame of what he had decided on doing;—in a word, succeeded so well, that he drew for the second time from the King, a promise that the marriage should never be declared.

Madame de Maintenon meanwhile expected every moment to be proclaimed Queen. At the end of some days disturbed by the silence of the King, she ventured to touch upon the subject. The embarrassment she caused the King much troubled her. He softened the affair as much as he could, but finished by begging her to think no more of being declared, and never to speak of it to him again! After the first shock that the loss of her hopes caused her, she sought to find out to whom she was beholden for it. She soon learned the truth; and it is not surprising that she swore to obtain Louvois's disgrace, and never ceased to work at it until successful. She waited her opportunity, and undermined her enemy at leisure, availing herself of every occasion to make him odious to the King.

Time passed. At length it happened that Louvois, not content with the terrible executions in the Palatinate, which he had counselled, wished to burn Trèves. He proposed it to the King. A dispute arose between them, but the King would not or could not be persuaded. It may be imagined that Madame de Maintenon did not do much to convince him.

Some days afterwards Louvois, who had the fault of obstinacy, came as usual to work with the King in Madame de Maintenon's rooms. At the end of

the sitting he said, that he felt convinced that it was scrupulousness alone which had hindered the King from consenting to so necessary an act as the burning of Trèves, and that he had, therefore, taken the responsibility on himself by sending a courier with orders to set fire to the place at once.

The King was immediately, and contrary to his nature, so transported with anger that he seized the tongs, and was about to make a run at Louvois, when Madame de Maintenon placed herself between them, crying, "Oh, Sire, what are you going to do?" and took the tongs from his hands.

Louvois, meanwhile, gained the door. The King cried after him to recall him, and said, with flashing eyes: "Despatch a courier instantly with a counter-order, and let him arrive in time; for, know this: if a single house is burned your head shall answer for it." Louvois, more dead than alive, hastened away at once.

Of course, he had sent off no courier. He said he had, believing that by this trick the King, though he might be angry, would be led to give way. He had reckoned wrongly, however, as we have seen.

From this time forward Louvois became day by day more distasteful to the King. In the winter of 1690, he proposed that, in order to save expense, the ladies should not accompany the King to the siege of Mons. Madame de Maintenon, we may be sure, did not grow more kindly disposed towards him after this. But as it is always the last drop of water that makes the glass overflow, so a trifle that happened at this siege, completed the disgrace of Louvois.

The King, who plumed himself upon knowing better than anybody the minutest military details, walking one day about the camp, found an ordinary cavalry guard ill-posted, and placed it differently. Later the same day he again visited by chance the spot,

and found the guard replaced as at first. He was surprised and shocked. He asked the captain who had done this, and was told it was Louvois.

"But," replied the King, "did you not tell him 'twas I who had placed you?"

"Yes, Sire," replied the captain. The King piqued, turned towards his suite, and said: "That's Louvois's trade, is it not? He thinks himself a great captain, and that he knows everything," and forthwith he replaced the guard as he had put it in the morning. It was, indeed, foolishness and insolence on the part of Louvois, and the King had spoken truly of him. The King was so wounded that he could not pardon him. After Louvois's death, he related this incident to Pomponne, still annoyed at it, as I knew by means of the Abbé de Pomponne.

After the return from Mons the dislike of the King for Louvois augmented to such an extent, that this minister, who was so presumptuous, and who thought himself so necessary, began to tremble. The Maréchale de Rochefort having gone with her daughter, Madame de Blansac, to dine with him at Meudon, he took them out for a ride in a little *calèche,* which he himself drove. They heard him repeatedly say to himself, musing profoundly, "Will he? Will he be made to? No—and yet—no, he will not dare."

During this monologue Louvois was so absorbed that he was within an ace of driving them all into the water, and would have done so, had they not seized the reins, and cried out that he was going to drown them. At their cries and movement, Louvois awoke as from a deep sleep, drew up, and turned, saying that, indeed, he was musing, and not thinking of the vehicle.

I was at Versailles at that time, and happened to call upon Louvois about some business of my father's.

The same day I met him after dinner as he was going to work with the King. About four o'clock in the afternoon I learned that he had been taken rather unwell at Madame de Maintenon's, that the King had forced him to go home, that he had done so on foot, that some trifling remedy was administered to him there, and that during the operation of it he died!

The surprise of all the Court may be imagined. Although I was little more than fifteen years of age, I wished to see the countenance of the King after the occurrence of an event of this kind. I went and waited for him, and followed him during all his promenade. He appeared to me with his accustomed majesty, but had a nimble manner, as though he felt more free than usual. I remarked that, instead of going to see his fountains, and diversifying his walk as usual, he did nothing but walk up and down by the balustrade of the orangery, whence he could see, in returning towards the château, the lodging in which Louvois had just died, and towards which he unceasingly looked.

The name of Louvois was never afterwards pronounced; not a word was said upon this death so surprising, and so sudden, until the arrival of an officer, sent by the King of England from Saint-Germain, who came to the King upon this terrace, and paid him a compliment of condolence upon the loss he had received.

"Monsieur," replied the King, in a tone and with a manner more than easy, "give my compliments and my thanks to the King and Queen of England, and say to them in my name, that my affairs and theirs will go on none the worse for what has happened."

The officer made a bow and retired, astonishment painted upon his face, and expressed in all his bearing. I anxiously observed all this, and also remarked

that all the principal people around the King looked at each other, but said no word. The fact was, as I afterwards learned, that Louvois, when he died, was so deeply in disgrace, that the very next day he was to have been arrested and sent to the Bastille! The King told Chamillart so, and Chamillart related it to me. This explains, I fancy, the joy of the King at the death of his minister; for it saved him from executing the plan he had resolved on.

The suddenness of the disease and death of Louvois caused much talk, especially when, on the opening of the body, it was discovered that he had been poisoned. A servant was arrested on the charge; but before the trial took place he was liberated, at the express command of the King, and the whole affair was hushed up. Five or six months afterwards Séron, private physician of Louvois, barricaded himself in his apartment at Versailles, and uttered dreadful cries. People came but he refused to open; and as the door could not be forced, he went on shrieking all day, without succour, spiritual or temporal, saying at last that he had got what he deserved for what he had done to his master; that he was a wretch unworthy of help; and so he died despairing, in eight or ten hours, without having spoken of any one, or uttered a single name!

CHAPTER LXXVII

IT must not be imagined that in order to maintain her position Madame de Maintenon had need of no address. Her reign, on the contrary, was only one continual intrigue; and that of the King a perpetual dupery.

Her mornings, which she commenced very early, were occupied with obscure audiences for charitable or spiritual affairs. Pretty often, at eight o'clock in the morning, or earlier, she went to some minister; the ministers of war, above all those of finance, were those with whom she had most business.

Ordinarily as soon as she rose, she went to Saint-Cyr, dined in her apartment there alone, or with some favourite of the house, gave as few audiences as possible, ruled over the arrangements of the establishment, meddled with the affairs of convents, read and replied to letters, directed the affairs of the house, received information and letters from her spies, and returned to Versailles just as the King was ready to enter her rooms. When older and more infirm, she would lie down in bed on arriving between seven and eight o'clock in the morning at Saint-Cyr, or take some remedy.

Towards nine o'clock in the evening two waiting-women came to undress her. Immediately afterwards, her *maître d'hôtel,* or a *valet de chambre* brought her her supper—soup, or something light. As soon as she had finished her meal, her women put her to bed, and all this in the presence of the King and his minister, who did not cease working or speak lower. This done,

ten o'clock had arrived; the curtains of Madame de Maintenon were drawn, and the King went to supper, after saying good night to her.

When with the King in her own room, they each occupied an armchair, with a table between them, at either side of the fireplace, hers towards the bed, the King's with the back to the wall, where was the door of the ante-chamber; two stools were before the table, one for the minister who came to work, the other for his papers.

During the work Madame de Maintenon read or worked at tapestry. She heard all that passed between the King and his minister, for they spoke out loud. Rarely did she say anything, or, if so, it was of no moment. The King often asked her opinion; then she replied with great discretion. Never did she appear to lay stress on anything, still less to interest herself for anybody, but she had an understanding with the minister, who did not dare to oppose her in private, still less to trip in her presence. When some favour or some post was to be granted, the matter was arranged between them beforehand; and this it was that sometimes delayed her, without the King or anybody knowing the cause.

She would send word to the minister that she wished to speak to him. He did not dare to bring anything forward until he had received her orders; until the revolving mechanism of each day had given them the leisure to confer together. That done, the minister proposed and showed a list. If by chance the King stopped at the name Madame de Maintenon wished, the minister stopped too, and went no further. If the King stopped at some other, the minister proposed that he should look at those which were also fitting, allowed the King leisure to make his observations, and profited by them, to exclude the people who were not

wanted. Rarely did he propose expressly the name to which he wished to come, but always suggested several that he tried to balance against each other, so as to embarrass the King in his choice. Then the King asked his opinion, and the minister, after touching upon other names, fixed upon the one he had selected.

The King nearly always hesitated, and asked Madame de Maintenon what she thought. She smiled, shammed incapacity, said a word upon some other name, then returned, if she had not fixed herself there at first, to that which the minister had proposed; so that three-fourths of the favours and opportunities which passed through the hands of the ministers in her rooms—and three-fourths even of the remaining fourth—were disposed of by her. Sometimes when she had nobody for whom she cared, it was the minister, with her consent and her help, who decided, without the King having the least suspicion. He thought he disposed of everything by himself; whilst, in fact, he disposed only of the smallest part, and always then by chance, except on the rare occasions when he specially wished to favour some one.

As for state matters, if Madame de Maintenon wished to make them succeed, fail, or turn in some particular fashion (which happened much less often than where favours and appointments were in the wind,) the same intelligence and the same intrigue were carried on between herself and the minister. By these particulars it will be seen that this clever woman did nearly all she wished, but not when or how she wished.

There was another scheme if the King stood out; it was to avoid decision by confusing and spinning out the matter in hand, or by substituting another as though arising opportunely out of it, and by which it was turned aside, or by proposing that some explana-

tions should be obtained. The first ideas of the King were thus weakened, and the charge was afterwards returned to, with the same address, oftentimes with success.

It is this which made the ministers so necessary to Madame de Maintenon, and her so necessary to them. She rendered them, in fact, continual services by means of the King, in return for the services they rendered her. The mutual concerns, therefore, between her and them were infinite; the King, all the while, not having the slightest suspicion of what was going on!

The power of Madame de Maintenon was, as may be imagined, immense. She had everybody in her hands, from the highest and most favoured minister to the meanest subject of the realm. Many people have been ruined by her, without having been able to discover the author of their ruin, search as they might. All attempts to find a remedy were equally unsuccessful.

Yet the King was constantly on his guard, not only against Madame de Maintenon, but against his ministers also. Many a time it happened that when sufficient care had not been taken, and he perceived that a minister or a general wished to favour a relative or *protégé* of Madame de Maintenon, he firmly opposed the appointment on that account alone, and the remarks he uttered thereupon made Madame de Maintenon very timid and very measured when she wished openly to ask a favour.

Le Tellier, long before he was made Chancellor, well knew the mood of the King. One of his friends asked him for some place that he much desired. Le Tellier replied that he would do what he could. The friend did not like this reply, and frankly said that it was not such as he expected from a man with such authority. "You do not know the ground," replied Le Tellier; "of

twenty matters that we bring before the King, we are sure he will pass nineteen according to our wishes; we are equally certain that the twentieth will be decided against them. But which of the twenty will be decided contrary to our desire we never know, although it may be the one we have most at heart. The King reserves to himself this caprice, to make us feel that he is the master, and that he governs; and if, by chance, something is presented upon which he is obstinate, and which is sufficiently important for us to be obstinate about also, either on account of the thing itself, or for the desire we have that it should succeed as we wish, we very often get a dressing; but, in truth, the dressing over, and the affair fallen through, the King, content with having showed that we can do nothing, and pained by having vexed us, becomes afterwards supple and flexible, so that then is the time at which we can do all we wish."

This is, in truth, how the King conducted himself with his ministers, always completely governed by them, even by the youngest and most mediocre, even by the least accredited and the least respected—yet always on his guard against being governed, and always persuaded that he succeeded fully in avoiding it.

He adopted the same conduct towards Madame de Maintenon, whom at times he scolded terribly, and applauded himself for so doing. Sometimes she threw herself on her knees before him, and for several days was really upon thorns. When she had appointed Fagon physician of the King in place of Daquin, whom she dismissed, she had a doctor upon whom she could certainly rely, and she played the sick woman accordingly, after those scenes with the King, and in this manner turned them to her own advantage.

It was not that this artifice had any power in constraining the King, or that a real illness would have

had any. He was a man solely personal, and who counted others only as they stood in relation to himself. His hard-heartedness, therefore, was extreme. At the time when he was most inclined towards his mistresses, whatever indisposition they might labour under, even the most opposed to travelling and to appearing in full court dress, could not save them from either. When *enceinte,* or ill, or just risen from childbirth, they must needs be squeezed into full dress, go to Flanders or further, dance, sit up, attend fêtes, eat, be merry and good company; go from place to place; appear neither to fear, nor to be inconvenienced by heat, cold, wind, or dust; and all this precisely to the hour and day, without a minute's grace.

His daughters he treated in the same manner. It has been seen, in its place, that he had no more consideration for Madame la Duchesse de Berry, nor even for Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne—whatever Fagon, Madame de Maintenon, and others might do or say. Yet he loved Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne as tenderly as he was capable of loving anybody: but both she and Madame la Duchesse de Berry had miscarriages, which relieved him, he said, though they then had no children.

When he travelled, his coach was always full of women; his mistresses, afterwards his bastards, his daughters-in-law, sometimes Madame, and other ladies when there was room. In the coach, during his journeys, there were always all sorts of things to eat, as meat, pastry, fruit. A quarter of a league was not passed over before the King asked if somebody would not eat. He never ate anything between meals himself, not even fruit; but he amused himself by seeing others do so, aye, and to bursting. You were obliged to be hungry, merry, and to eat with appetite, otherwise he was displeased, and even showed it. And yet

after this, if you supped with him at table the same day, you were compelled to eat with as good a countenance as though you had tasted nothing since the previous night. He was as inconsiderate in other and more delicate matters; and ladies, in his long drives and stations, had often occasion to curse him. The Duchesse de Chevreuse once rode all the way from Versailles to Fontainebleau in such extremity, that several times she was well-nigh losing consciousness.

The King, who was fond of air, liked all the windows to be lowered; he would have been much displeased had any lady drawn a curtain for protection against sun, wind, or cold. No inconvenience or incommodity was allowed to be even perceived; and the King always went very quickly, most frequently with relays. To faint was a fault past hope of pardon.

Madame de Maintenon, who feared the air and many other inconveniences, could gain no privilege over the others. All she obtained, under pretence of modesty and other reasons, was permission to journey apart; but whatever condition she might be in, she was obliged to follow the King, and be ready to receive him in her rooms by the time he was ready to enter them. She made many journeys to Marly in a state such as would have saved a servant from movement. She made one to Fontainebleau when it seemed not unlikely that she would die on the road! In whatever condition she might be, the King went to her at his ordinary hour and did what he had projected; though several times she was in bed, profusely sweating away a fever. The King, who as I have said, was fond of air, and feared warm rooms, was astonished upon arriving to find everything close shut, and ordered the windows to be opened; would not spare them an inch;

and up to ten o'clock, when he went to supper, kept them open, utterly regardless of the cool night air, although he knew well what a state she was in. If there was to be music, fever or headache availed not; a hundred wax candles flashed all the same in her eyes. The King, in fact, always followed his own inclination, without ever asking whether she was inconvenienced.

The tranquillity and pious resignation of the King during the last days of his illness, was a matter of some surprise to many people, as, indeed, it deserved to be. By way of explanation, the doctors said that the malady he died of, while it deadens and destroys all bodily pain, calms and annihilates all heart pangs and agitation of the mind.

They who were in the sick-chamber, during the last days of his illness, gave another reason.

The Jesuits constantly admit the laity, even married, into their company. This fact is certain. There is no doubt that Des Noyers, Secretary of State under Louis XIII., was of this number, or that many others have been so too. These licentiates make the same vow as the Jesuits, as far as their condition admits: that is, unrestricted obedience to the General, and to the superiors of the company. They are obliged to supply the place of the vows of poverty and chastity, by promising to give all the service and all the protection in their power to the Company, above all, to be entirely submissive to the superiors and to their confessor. They are obliged to perform, with exactitude, such light exercises of piety as their confessor may think adapted to the circumstances of their lives, and that he simplifies as much as he likes. It answers the purpose of the Company to ensure to itself those hidden auxiliaries whom it lets off cheaply. But nothing must pass through their minds, nothing must come to their

knowledge that they do not reveal to their confessor; and that which is not a secret of the conscience, to the superiors, if the confessor thinks fit. In everything, too, they must obey without comment, the superior and the confessors.

It has been pretended that Père Tellier had inspired the King, long before his death, with the desire to be admitted, on this footing, into the Company; that he had vaunted to him the privileges and plenary indulgences attached to it; that he had persuaded him that whatever crimes had been committed, and whatever difficulty there might be in making amends for them, this secret profession washed out all, and infallibly assured salvation, provided that the vows were faithfully kept; that the General of the Company was admitted into the secret with the consent of the King; that the King pronounced the vows before Père Tellier; that in the last days of his life they were heard, the one fortifying, the other resposing upon these promises; that, at last, the King received from Père Tellier the final benediction of the Company, as one of its members; that Père Tellier made the King offer up prayers, partly heard, of a kind to leave no doubt of the matter; and that he had given him the robe, or the almost imperceptible sign, as it were, a sort of scapulary, which was found upon him. To conclude, the majority of those who approached the King in his last moments attributed his penitence to the artifices and persuasions of the Jesuits, who, for temporal interests, deceive sinners even up to the edge of the tomb, and conduct them to it in profound peace by a path strewn with flowers.

However it is but fair to say, that Maréchal, who was very trustful, assured me he had never perceived anything which justified this idea, and that he was persuaded there was not the least truth in it; and I

think, that although he was not always in the chamber or near the bed, and although Père Tellier might mistrust and try to deceive him, still if the King had been made a Jesuit as stated, Maréchal must have had some knowledge or some suspicion of the circumstance.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

AFTER having thus described with truth and the most exact fidelity all that has come to my knowledge through my own experience, or others qualified to speak of Louis XIV. during the last twenty-two years of his life: and after having shown him such as he was, without prejudice (although I have permitted myself to use the arguments naturally resulting from things), nothing remains but to describe the outside life of this monarch, during my residence at the Court.

However insipid and perhaps superfluous details so well known may appear after what has been already given,—lessons will be found therein for kings who may wish to make themselves respected, and who may wish to respect themselves. What determines me still more is, that details wearying, nay annoying, to instructed readers, who had been witnesses of what I relate, soon escape the knowledge of posterity; and that experience shows us how much we regret that no one takes upon himself a labour, in his own time so ungrateful, but in future years so interesting, and by which princes, who have made quite as much stir as the one in question, are characterised. Although it may be difficult to steer clear of repetitions, I will do my best to avoid them.

I will not speak much of the King's manner of living when with the army. His hours were determined by what was to be done, though he held his councils regularly; I will simply say, that morning and evening he ate with people privileged to have that honour. When any one wished to claim it, the first gentleman of the chamber on duty was appealed to. He gave the answer, and if favourable you presented yourself the next day to the King, who said to you, "Monsieur, seat yourself at table." That being done, all was done. Ever afterwards you were at liberty to take a place at the King's table, but with discretion. The number of the persons from whom a choice was made was, however, very limited. Even very high military rank did not suffice. M. de Vauban, at the siege of Namur, was overwhelmed by the distinction. The King did the same honour at Namur to the Abbé de Grancey, who exposed himself everywhere to confess the wounded and encourage the troops. No other Abbé was ever so distinguished. All the clergy were excluded save the cardinals, and the bishops, peers, or the ecclesiastics who held the rank of foreign princes.

At these repasts everybody was covered; it would have been a want of respect, of which you would have been immediately informed, if you had not kept your hat on your head. The King alone was uncovered. When the King wished to speak to you, or you had occasion to speak to him, you uncovered. You uncovered, also, when Monseigneur or Monsieur spoke to you, or you to them. For Princes of the blood you merely put your hand to your hat. The King alone had an armchair. All the rest of the company, Monseigneur included, had seats, with backs of black morocco leather, which could be folded up to be carried, and which were called "parrots." Except at the army, the King never ate with any man, under what-

ever circumstances; not even with the Princes of the blood, save sometimes at their wedding feasts.

Let us return now to the Court.

At eight o'clock the chief *valet de chambre* on duty, who alone had slept in the royal chamber, and who had dressed himself, awoke the King. The chief physician, the chief surgeon, and the nurse (as long as she lived), entered at the same time. The latter kissed the King; the others rubbed and often changed his shirt, because he was in the habit of sweating a great deal. At the quarter, the grand chamberlain was called (or, in his absence, the first gentleman of the chamber), and those who had what was called the *grandes entrées*. The chamberlain (or chief gentleman) drew back the curtains which had been closed again, and presented the holy-water from the vase, at the head of the bed. These gentlemen stayed but a moment, and that was the time to speak to the King, if any one had anything to ask of him; in which case the rest stood aside. When, contrary to custom, nobody had aught to say, they were there but for a few moments. He who had opened the curtains and presented the holy-water, presented also a prayer-book. Then all passed into the cabinet of the council. A very short religious service being over, the King called, they re-entered. The same officer gave him his dressing-gown; immediately after, other privileged courtiers entered, and then everybody, in time to find the King putting on his shoes and stockings, for he did almost everything himself and with address and grace. Every other day we saw him shave himself; and he had a little short wig in which he always appeared, even in bed, and on medicine days. He often spoke of the chase, and sometimes said a word to somebody. No toilette table was near him; he had simply a mirror held before him.

As soon as he was dressed, he prayed to God, at the side of his bed, where all the clergy present knelt, the cardinals without cushions, all the laity remaining standing; and the captain of the guards came to the balustrade during the prayer, after which the King passed into his cabinet.

He found there, or was followed by all who had the *entrée,* a very numerous company, for it included everybody in any office. He gave orders to each for the day; thus within a half a quarter of an hour it was known what he meant to do; and then all this crowd left directly. The bastards, a few favourites, and the valets alone were left. It was then a good opportunity for talking with the King; for example, about plans of gardens and buildings; and conversation lasted more or less according to the person engaged in it.

All the Court meantime waited for the King in the gallery, the captain of the guard being alone in the chamber seated at the door of the cabinet. At morning the Court awaited in the saloon; at Trianon in the front rooms as at Meudon; at Fontainebleau in the chamber and ante-chamber. During this pause the King gave audiences when he wished to accord any, spoke with whoever he might wish to speak secretly to, and gave secret interviews to foreign ministers in presence of Torcy. They were called "secret" simply to distinguish them from the uncommon ones by the bedsides.

The King went to mass, where his musicians always sang an anthem. He did not go below except on grand fêtes or at ceremonies. Whilst he was going to and returning from mass, everybody spoke to him who wished, after apprising the captain of the guard, if they were not distinguished; and he came and went by the door of the cabinet into the gallery. During the mass the ministers assembled in the King's chamber,

where distinguished people could go and speak or chat with them. The King amused himself a little upon returning from mass and asked almost immediately for the council. Then the morning was finished.

On Sunday, and often on Monday, there was a council of state; on Tuesday a finance council; on Wednesday council of state; on Saturday finance council. Rarely were two held in one day or any on Thursday or Friday. Once or twice a month there was a council of despatches on Monday morning; but the order that the Secretaries of State took every morning between the King's rising and his mass, much abridged this kind of business. All the ministers were seated accordingly to rank, except at the council of despatches, where all stood except the sons of France, the Chancellor, and the Duc de Beauvilliers.

Thursday morning was almost always blank. It was the day for audiences that the King wished to give—often unknown to any—back-stair audiences. It was also the grand day taken advantage of by the bastards, the valets, etc., because the King had nothing to do. On Friday after the mass the King was with his confessor, and the length of their audiences was limited by nothing, and might last until dinner. At Fontainebleau on the mornings when there was no council, the King usually passed from mass to Madame de Maintenon's, and so at Trianon and Marly. It was the time for their *tête-à-tête* without interruption. Often on the days when there was no council the dinner hour was advanced, more or less for the chase or the promenade. The ordinary hour was one o'clock; if the council still lasted, then the dinner waited and nothing was said to the King.

The dinner was always *au petit couvert,* that is, the King ate by himself in his chamber upon a square table in front of the middle window. It was more or less

abundant, for he ordered in the morning whether it was to be "a little, or "very little" service. But even at this last, there were always many dishes, and three courses without counting the fruit. The dinner being ready, the principal courtiers entered; then all who were known; and the gentleman of the chamber on duty informed the King.

I have seen, but very rarely, Monseigneur and his sons standing at their dinners, the King not offering them a seat. I have continually seen there the Princes of the blood and the cardinals. I have often seen there also Monsieur, either on arriving from Saint-Cloud to see the King, or arriving from the council of despatches (the only one he entered), give the King his napkin and remain standing. A little while afterwards, the King, seeing that he did not go away, asked him if he would not sit down; he bowed, and the King ordered a seat to be brought for him. A stool was put behind him. Some moments after the King said, "Nay then, sit down, my brother." Monsieur bowed and seated himself until the end of the dinner, when he presented the napkin.

At other times when he came from Saint-Cloud, the King, on arriving at the table, asked for a plate for Monsieur, or asked him if he would dine. If he refused, he went away a moment after, and there was no mention of a seat; if he accepted, the King asked for a plate for him. The table was square, he placed himself at one end, his back to the cabinet. Then the Grand Chamberlain (or the first gentleman of the chamber) gave him drink and plates, taking them from him as he finished with them, exactly as he served the King; but Monsieur received all this attention with strongly marked politeness. When he dined thus with the King he much enlivened the conversation. The King ordinarily spoke little at table unless some famil-

iar favourite was near. It was the same at his rising. Ladies scarcely ever were seen at these little dinners.

I have, however, seen the Maréchale de la Mothe, who came in because she had been used to do so as governess to the children of France, and who received a seat, because she was a Duchess. Grand dinners were very rare, and only took place on grand occasions, and then ladies were present.

Upon leaving the table the King immediately entered his cabinet. That was the time for distinguished people to speak to him. He stopped at the door a moment to listen, then entered; very rarely did any one follow him, never without asking him for permission to do so; and for this few had the courage. If followed he placed himself in the embrasure of the window nearest to the door of the cabinet, which immediately closed of itself, and which you were obliged to open yourself on quitting the King. This also was the time for the bastards and the valets.

The King amused himself by feeding his dogs, and remained with them more or less time, then asked for his wardrobe, changed before the very few distinguished people it pleased the first gentleman of the chamber to admit there, and immediately went out by the back stairs into the court of marble to get into his coach. From the bottom of that staircase to the coach, any one spoke to him who wished.

The King was fond of air, and when deprived of it his health suffered; he had headaches and vapours caused by the undue use he had formerly made of perfumes, so that for many years he could not endure any, except the odour of orange flowers; therefore if you had to approach anywhere near him you did well not to carry them.

As he was but little sensitive to heat or cold, or even

to rain, the weather was seldom sufficiently bad to prevent his going abroad. He went out for three objects: stag-hunting, once or more each week; shooting in his parks (and no man handled a gun with more grace or skill), once or twice each week; and walking in his gardens for exercise, and to see his workmen. Sometimes he made picnics with ladies, in the forest at Marly or at Fontainebleau, and in this last place, promenades with all the Court around the canal, which was a magnificent spectacle. Nobody followed him in his other promenades but those who held principal offices, except at Versailles or in the gardens of Trianon. Marly had a privilege unknown to the other places. On going out from the château, the King said aloud, "Your hats, gentlemen," and immediately courtiers, officers of the guard, everybody, in fact, covered their heads, as he would have been much displeased had they not done so; and this lasted all the promenade, that is four or five hours in summer, or in other seasons, when he dined early at Versailles to go and walk at Marly, and not sleep there.

The stag-hunting parties were on an extensive scale. At Fontainebleau every one went who wished; elsewhere only those were allowed to go who had obtained the permission once for all, and those who had obtained leave to wear the *justau-corps,* which was a blue uniform with silver and gold lace, lined with red. The King did not like too many people at these parties. He did not care for you to go if you were not fond of the chase. He thought that ridiculous, and never bore ill-will to those who stopped away altogether.

It was the same with the play-table, which he liked to see always well frequented—with high stakes—in the saloon at Marly, for lansquenet and other games. He amused himself at Fontainebleau during bad

weather by seeing good players at tennis, in which he had formerly excelled; and at Marly by seeing mall played, in which he had also been skilful. Sometimes when there was no council, he would make presents of stuff, or of silverware, or jewels, to the ladies, by means of a lottery, for the tickets of which they paid nothing. Madame de Maintenon drew lots with the others, and almost always gave at once what she gained. The King took no ticket.

Upon returning home from walks or drives, anybody, as I have said, might speak to the King from the moment he left his coach till he reached the foot of his staircase. He changed his dress again, and rested in his cabinet an hour or more, then went to Madame de Maintenon's, and on the way any one who wished might speak to him.

At ten o'clock his supper was served. The captain of the guard announced this to him. A quarter of an hour after the King came to supper, and from the antechamber of Madame de Maintenon to the table again, any one spoke to him who wished. This supper was always on a grand scale, the royal household (that is, the sons and daughters of France) at table, and a large number of courtiers and ladies present, sitting or standing, and on the evening before the journey to Marly all those ladies who wished to take part in it. That was called presenting yourself for Marly. Men asked in the morning, simply saying to the King, "Sire, Marly." In later years the King grew tired of this, and a valet wrote up in the gallery the names of those who asked. The ladies continued to present themselves.

After supper the King stood some moments, his back to the balustrade of the foot of his bed, encircled by all his Court; then, with bows to the ladies, passed into his cabinet, where, on arriving, he gave his orders.

He passed a little less than an hour there, seated in an armchair, with his legitimate children and bastards, his grandchildren, legitimate and otherwise, and their husbands or wives. Monsieur in another armchair; the Princesses upon stools, Monseigneur and all the other Princes standing.

The King, wishing to retire, went and fed his dogs; then said good night, passed into his chamber to the *ruelle* of his bed, where he said his prayers, as in the morning, then undressed. He said good night with an inclination of the head, and whilst everybody was leaving the room stood at the corner of the mantelpiece, where he gave the order to the colonel of the guards alone. Then commenced what was called the *petit coucher,* at which only the specially privileged remained. That was short. They did not leave until he got into bed. It was a moment to speak to him. Then all left if they saw any one buckle to the King. For ten or twelve years before he died the *petit coucher* ceased, in consequence of a long attack of gout he had had; so that the Court was finished at the rising from supper.

On medicine days, which occurred about once a month, the King remained in bed, then heard mass. The royal household came to see him for a moment, and Madame de Maintenon seated herself in the armchair at the head of his bed. The King dined in bed about three o'clock, everybody being allowed to enter the room, then rose, and the privileged alone remained. He passed afterwards into his cabinet, where he held a council, and afterwards went, as usual, to Madame de Maintenon's and supped at ten o'clock, according to custom.

During all his life, the King failed only once in his attendance at mass. It was with the army, during a forced march; he missed no fast day, unless really in-

disposed. Some days before Lent, he publicly declared that he should be very much displeased if any one ate meat or gave it to others, under any pretext. He ordered the grand prévôt to look to this, and report all cases of disobedience. But no one dared to disobey his commands, for they would soon have found out the cost. They extended even to Paris, where the lieutenant of police kept watch and reported. For twelve or fifteen years he had himself not observed Lent, however. At church he was very respectful. During his mass everybody was obliged to kneel at the *Sanctus*, and to remain so until after the communion of the priest; and if he heard the least noise, or saw anybody talking during the mass, he was much displeased. He took the communion five times a year, in the collar of the Order, band, and cloak. On Holy Thursday, he served the poor at dinner; at the mass he said his chaplet (he knew no more), always kneeling, except at the Gospel.

He was always clad in dresses more or less brown, lightly embroidered, but never at the edges, sometimes with nothing but a gold button, sometimes black velvet. He wore always a vest of cloth, or of red, blue, or green satin, much embroidered. He used no ring; and no jewels, except in the buckles of his shoes, garters, and hat, the latter always trimmed with Spanish point, with a white feather. He had always the *cordon bleu* outside, except at fêtes, when he wore it inside, with eight or ten millions of precious stones attached.

Rarely a fortnight passed that the King did not go to Saint-Germain, even after the death of King James the Second. The Court of Saint-Germain came also to Versailles, but oftener to Marly, and frequently to sup there; and no fête or ceremony took place to which they were not invited, and at which they were not

received with all honours. Nothing could compare with the politeness of the King for this Court, or with the air of gallantry and of majesty with which he received it at any time. Birth days, or the fête days of the King and his family, so observed in the courts of Europe, were always unknown in that of the King; so that there never was the slightest mention of them, or any difference made on their account.

The King was but little regretted. His valets and a few other people felt his loss, scarcely anybody else. His successor was not yet old enough to feel anything. Madame entertained for him only fear and considerate respect. Madame la Duchesse de Berry did not like him, and counted now upon reigning undisturbed. M. le Duc d'Orléans could scarcely be expected to feel much grief for him. And those who may have been expected did not consider it necessary to do their duty. Madame de Maintenon was wearied with him ever since the death of the Dauphine; she knew not what to do, or with what to amuse him; her constraint was tripled because he was much more with her than before. She had often, too, experienced much ill-humour from him. She had attained all she wished, so whatever she might lose in losing him, she felt herself relieved, and was capable of no other sentiment at first. The ennui and emptiness of her life afterwards made her feel regret. As for M. du Maine, the barbarous indecency of his joy need not be dwelt upon. The icy tranquillity of his brother, the Comte de Toulouse, neither increased nor diminished. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans surprised me. I had expected some grief, I perceived only a few tears, which upon all occasions flowed very readily from her eyes, and which were soon dried up. Her bed, which she was very fond of, supplied what was wanting during several days, amidst obscurity which she by no means disliked.

But the window curtains were soon withdrawn and grief disappeared.

As for the Court, it was divided into two grand parties, the men hoping to figure, to obtain employ, to introduce themselves: and they were ravished to see the end of a reign under which they had nothing to hope for; the others, fatigued with a heavy yoke, always overwhelming, and of the ministers much more than of the King, were charmed to find themselves at liberty. Thus all, generally speaking, were glad to be delivered from continual restraint, and were eager for change.

Paris, tired of a dependence which had enslaved everything, breathed again in the hope of liberty, and with joy at seeing at an end the authority of so many people who abused it. The provinces in despair at their ruin and their annihilation breathed again and leaped for joy; and the Parliament and the robe destroyed by edicts and by revolutions, flattered themselves the first that they should figure, the other that they should find themselves free. The people ruined, overwhelmed, desperate, gave thanks to God, with a scandalous éclat, for a deliverance, their most ardent desires had not anticipated.

Foreigners delighted to be at last, after so many years, quit of a monarch who had so long imposed his law upon them, and who had escaped from them by a species of miracle at the very moment in which they counted upon having subjugated him, contained themselves with much more decency than the French. The marvels of the first three quarters of this reign of more than seventy years, and the personal magnanimity of this King until then so successful, and so abandoned afterwards by fortune during the last quarter of his reign—had justly dazzled them. They made it a point of honour to render to him after his death what they

had constantly refused him during life. No foreign Court exulted: all plumed themselves upon praising and honouring his memory. The Emperor wore mourning as for a father, and although four or five months elapsed between the death of the King and the Carnival, all kinds of amusements were prohibited at Vienna during the Carnival, and the prohibition was strictly observed. A monstrous fact was, that towards the end of this period there was a single ball and a kind of fête that the Comte du Luc our own ambassador, was not ashamed to give to the ladies, who seduced him by the ennui of so dull a Carnival. This complaisance did not raise him in estimation at Vienna or elsewhere. In France people were contented with ignoring it.

As for our ministry and the intendants of the provinces, the financiers and what may be called the *canaille*, they felt all the extent of their loss. We shall see if the realm was right or wrong in the sentiments it held, and whether it found soon after that it had gained or lost.

To finish at once all that regards the King, let me here say, that his entrails were taken to Notre Dame, on the 4th of September, without any ceremony, by two almoners of the King, without accompaniment. On Friday, the 6th of September, the Cardinal de Rohan carried the heart to the Grand Jesuits, with very little accompaniment or pomp. Except the persons necessary for the ceremony, not half a dozen courtiers were present. It is not for me to comment upon this prompt ingratitude, I, who for fifty-two years have never once missed going to Saint-Denis on the anniversary of the death of Louis XIII., and have never seen a single person there on the same errand. On the 9th of September, the body of the late King was buried at Saint-Denis. The Bishop of Aleth pro-

nounced the oration. Very little expense was gone to; and nobody was found who cared sufficiently for the late King to murmur at the economy. On Friday, the 25th of October, his solemn obsequies took place at Saint-Denis in a confusion, as to rank and precedence, without example. On Thursday, the 28th of November, the solemn obsequies were again performed, this time at Notre Dame, and with the usual ceremonies.

CHAPTER LXXIX

THE death of the King surprised M. le Duc d'Orléans in the midst of his idleness as though it had not been foreseen. He had made no progress in numberless arrangements, which I had suggested he should carry out; accordingly he was overwhelmed with orders to give, with things to settle, each more petty than the other, but all so provisional and so urgent that it happened as I had predicted, he had no time to think of anything important.

I learnt the death of the King upon awaking. Immediately after, I went to pay my respects to the new monarch. The first blood had already passed. I found myself almost alone. I went thence to M. le Duc d'Orléans, whom I found shut in, but all his apartments so full that a pin could not have fallen to the ground. I talked of the Convocation of the States-General, and reminded him of a promise he had given me, that he would allow the Dukes to keep their hats on when their votes were asked for; and I also mentioned various other promises he had made. All I could obtain from him was another promise, that when the public affairs of pressing moment awaiting attention were disposed of, we should have all we required. Several of the Dukes who had been witnesses of the engagement M. le Duc d'Orléans had made, were much vexed at this; but ultimately it was agreed that for the moment we would sacrifice our own particular interests to those of the State.

Between five and six the next morning a number of us met at the house of the Archbishop of Rheims,

at the end of the Pont Royal, behind the Hôtel de Mailly, and there, in accordance with a resolution previously agreed upon, it was arranged that I should make a protest to the Parliament before the opening of the King's will there, against certain other usurpations, and state that it was solely because M. le Duc d'Orléans had given us his word that our complaints should be attended to as soon as the public affairs of the government were settled, that we postponed further measures upon this subject. It was past seven before our debate ended, and then we went straight to the Parliament.

We found it already assembled, and a few Dukes who had not attended our meeting, but had promised to be guided by us, were also present; and then a quarter of an hour after we were seated the bastards arrived. M. du Maine was bursting with joy; the term is strange, but his bearing cannot otherwise be described. The smiling and satisfied air prevailed over that of audacity and of confidence, which shone, nevertheless, and over politeness which seemed to struggle with them. He saluted right and left, and pierced everybody with his looks. His salutation to the Presidents had an air of rejoicing. To the peers he was serious, nay, respectful; the slowness, the lowness of his inclination, was eloquent. His head remained lowered even when he rose, so heavy is the weight of crime, even at the moment when nothing but triumph is expected. I rigidly followed him everywhere with my eyes, and I remarked that his salute was returned by the peers in a very dry and cold manner.

Scarcely were we re-seated than M. le Duc arrived, and the instant after M. le Duc d'Orléans. I allowed the stir that accompanied his appearance to subside a little, and then, seeing that the Chief-President was about to speak, I forestalled him, uncovered my head,

and then covered it, and made my speech in the terms agreed upon. I concluded by appealing to M. le Duc d'Orléans to verify the truth of what I had said, in so far as it affected him.

The profound silence with which I was listened to showed the surprise of all present. M. le Duc d'Orléans uncovered himself, and in a low tone, and with an embarrassed manner, confirmed what I had said, then covered himself again.

Immediately afterwards I looked at M. du Maine, who appeared to be well content at being let off so easily, and who, my neighbours said to me, appeared much troubled at my commencement.

A very short silence followed my protest, after which I saw the Chief-President say something in a low tone to M. le Duc d'Orléans, then arrange a deputation of the Parliament to go in search of the King's will, and its codicil, which had been put in the same place. Silence continued during this great and short period of expectation; every one looked at his neighbour without stirring. We were all upon the lower seats, the doors were supposed to be closed, but the grand chamber was filled with a large and inquisitive crowd. The regiment of guards had secretly occupied all the avenues, commanded by the Duc de Guiche, who got six hundred thousand francs out of the Duc d'Orléans for this service, which was quite unnecessary.

The deputation was not long in returning. It placed the will and the codicil in the hands of the Chief-President, who presented them, without parting with them, to M. le Duc d'Orléans, then passed them from hand to hand to Dreux, *conseiller* of the Parliament, and father of the grand master of the ceremonies, saying that he read well, and in a loud voice that would be well heard by everybody. It may be imagined with

what silence he was listened to, and how all eyes and ears were turned towards him. Through all his joy the Duc du Maine showed that his soul was troubled, as though about to undergo an operation that he must submit to. M. le Duc d'Orléans showed only a tranquil attention.

I will not dwell upon these two documents, in which nothing is provided but the grandeur and the power of the bastards, Madame de Maintenon and Saint-Cyr, the choice of the King's education and of the council of the regency, by which M. le Duc d'Orléans was to be shorn of all authority to the advantage of M. le Duc du Maine.

I remarked a sadness and a kind of indignation which were painted upon all cheeks, as the reading advanced, and which turned into a sort of tranquil fermentation at the reading of the codicil, which was entrusted to the Abbé Menguy, another *conseiller*. The Duc du Maine felt it and grew pale, for he was solely occupied in looking at every face, and I in following his looks, and in glancing occasionally at M. le Duc d'Orléans.

The reading being finished, that prince spoke, casting his eyes upon all the assembly, uncovering himself, and then covering himself again, and commencing by a word of praise and of regret for the late King; afterwards raising his voice, he declared that he had only to approve everything just read respecting the education of the King, and everything respecting an establishment so fine and so useful as that of Saint-Cyr; that with respect to the dispositions concerning the government of the state, he would speak separately of those in the will and those in the codicil; that he could with difficulty harmonise them with the assurances the King, during the last days of his life, had given him; that the King could not have understood the impor-

tance of what he had been made to do for the Duc du Maine since the council of the regency was chosen, and M. du Maine's authority so established by the will, that the Regent remained almost without power; that this injury done to the rights of his birth, to his attachment to the person of the King, to his love and fidelity for the state, could not be endured if he was to preserve his honour; and that he hoped sufficiently from the esteem of all present, to persuade himself that his regency would be declared as it ought to be, that is to say, complete, independent, and that he should be allowed to choose his own council, with the members of which he would not discuss public affairs, unless they were persons who, being approved by the public, might also have his confidence. This short speech appeared to make a great impression.

The Duc du Maine wished to speak. As he was about to do so, M. le Duc d'Orléans put his head in front of M. le Duc and said, in a dry tone, " Monsieur, you will speak in your turn." In one moment the affair turned according to the desires of M. le Duc d'Orléans. The power of the council of the regency and its composition fell. The choice of the council was awarded to M. le Duc d'Orléans, with all the authority of the regency, and to the plurality of the votes of the council, the decision of affairs, the vote of the Regent to be counted as two in the event of an equal division. Thus all favours and all punishments remained in the hands of M. le Duc d'Orléans alone. The acclamation was such that the Duc du Maine did not dare to say a word. He reserved himself for the codicil, which, if adopted, would have annulled all that M. le Duc d'Orléans had just obtained.

After some few moments of silence, M. le Duc d'Orléans spoke again. He testified fresh surprise that the dispositions of the will had not been sufficient for

those who had suggested them, and that, not content with having established themselves as masters of the state, they themselves should have thought those dispositions so strange that in order to re-assure them, it had been thought necessary to make them masters of the person of the King, of the Regent, of the Court, and of Paris. He added, that if his honour and all law and rule had been wounded by the dispositions of the will, still more violated were they by those of the codicil, which left neither his life nor his liberty in safety, and placed the person of the King in the absolute dependence of those who had dared to profit by the feeble state of a dying monarch, to draw from him conditions he did not understand. He concluded by declaring that the regency was impossible under such conditions, and that he doubted not the wisdom of the assembly would annul a codicil which could not be sustained, and the regulations of which would plunge France into the greatest and most troublesome misfortune. Whilst this prince spoke a profound and sad silence applauded him without explaining itself.

The Duc du Maine became of all colours, and began to speak, this time being allowed to do so. He said that the education of the King, and consequently his person, being confided to him, as a natural result, entire authority over his civil and military household followed, without which he could not properly serve him or answer for his person. Then he vaunted his well-known attachment to the deceased King, who had put all confidence in him.

M. le Duc d'Orléans interrupted him at this word, and commented upon it. M. du Maine wished to calm him by praising the Maréchal de Villeroy, who was to assist him in his charge. M. le Duc d'Orléans replied that it would be strange if the chief and most complete confidence were not placed in the Regent, and

stranger still if he were obliged to live under the protection and authority of those who had rendered themselves the absolute masters within and without, and of Paris even, by the regiment of guards.

The dispute grew warm, broken phrases were thrown from one to the other, when, troubled about the end of an altercation which became indecent and yielding to the proposal that the Duc de la Force had just made me in front of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who sat between us, I made a sign with my hand to M. le Duc d'Orléans to go out and finish this discussion in another room leading out of the grand chamber and where there was nobody. What led me to this action was that I perceived M. du Maine grew stronger, that confused murmurs for a division were heard, and that M. le Duc d'Orléans did not shine to the best advantage since he descended to plead his cause, so to speak, against that of the Duc du Maine.

M. le Duc d'Orléans was short-sighted. He was entirely absorbed in attacking and repelling; so that he did not see the sign I made. Some moments after I increased it, and meeting with no more success, rose, advanced some steps, and said to him, though rather distant, "Monsieur, if you passed into the fourth chamber with M. du Maine you could speak there more easily," and advancing nearer at the same time I pressed him by a sign of the head and the eyes that he could distinguish. He replied to me with another sign, and scarcely was I reseated than I saw him advance in front of M. le Duc to the Duc du Maine, and immediately after both rose and went into the chamber I had indicated. I could not see who of the scattered group around followed them, for all present rose at their departure, and seated themselves again directly in complete silence. Some time after, M. le Comte de Toulouse left his place and went into the

chamber. M. le Duc followed him in a little while; soon again the Duc de la Force did the same.

He did not stay long. Returning to the assembly, he passed the Duc de la Rochefoucauld and me, put his head between that of the Duc de Sully and mine, because he did not wish to be heard by La Rochefoucauld, and said to me, "In the name of God go there; things are getting on badly. M. le Duc d'Orléans gives way; stop the dispute; make M. le Duc d'Orléans come back; and, as soon as he is in his place, let him say that it is too late to finish, that the company had better go to dinner, and return to finish afterwards, and during this interval," added La Force, "send the King's people to the Palais Royal, and let doubtful peers be spoken to, and the chiefs among other magistrates."

The advice appeared to me good and important. I left the assembly and went to the chamber. I found a large circle of spectators. M. le Duc d'Orléans and the Duc du Maine stood before the fireplace, looking both very excited. I looked at this spectacle some moments; then approached the mantelpiece like a man who wishes to speak. "What is this, Monsieur?" said M. le Duc d'Orléans to me, with an impatient manner. "A pressing word, Monsieur, that I have to say to you," said I. He continued speaking to the Duc du Maine, I being close by. I redoubled my instances; he lent me his ear. "No, no," said I, "not like that, come here," and I took him into a corner by the chimney. The Comte de Toulouse, who was there, drew completely back, and all the circle on that side. The Duc du Maine drew back also from where he was.

I said to M. le Duc d'Orléans, in his ear, that he could not hope to gain anything from M. du Maine, who would not sacrifice the codicil to his reasonings; that the length of their conference became indecent,

useless, dangerous; that he was making a sight of himself to all who entered; that the only thing to be done was to return to the assembly, and, when there, dissolve it. "You are right," said he, "I will do it." "But," said I, "do it immediately, and do not allow yourself to be amused. It is to M. de la Force you owe this advice: he sent me to give it you." He quitted me without another word, went to M. du Maine, told him in two words that it was too late, and that the matter must be finished after dinner.

I had remained where he left me. I saw the Duc du Maine bow to him immediately, and the two separated, and retired at the same moment into the assembly.

The noise which always accompanies these entrances being appeased, M. le Duc d'Orléans said it was too late to abuse the patience of the company any longer; that dinner must be eaten, and the work finished afterwards. He immediately added, he believed it fitting that M. le Duc should enter the council of the regency as its chief; and that since the company had rendered the justice due to his birth and his position as Regent, he would explain what he thought upon the form to be given to the government, and that meanwhile he profited by the power he had to avail himself of the knowledge and the wisdom of the company, and restored to them from that time their former liberty of remonstrance. These words were followed by striking and general applause, and the assembly was immediately adjourned.

I was invited this day to dine with the Cardinal de Noailles, but I felt the importance of employing the time so precious and so short, of the interval of dinner, and of not quitting M. le Duc d'Orléans, according to a suggestion of M. le Duc de la Force. I approached M. le Duc d'Orléans, and said in his ear, "The moments are precious: I will follow you to the

Palais Royal," and went back to my place among the peers. Jumping into my coach, I sent a gentleman with my excuses to the Cardinal de Noailles, saying, I would tell him the reason of my absence afterwards. Then I went to the Palais Royal, where curiosity had gathered together all who were not at the palace, and even some who had been there. All the acquaintances I met asked me the news with eagerness. I contented myself with replying that everything went well, and according to rule, but that all was not yet finished.

M. le Duc d'Orléans had passed into a cabinet, where I found him alone with Canillac, who had waited for him. We took our measures there, and M. le Duc d'Orléans sent for the Attorney-General, D'Aguesseau, afterwards Chancellor, and the chief Advocate-General, Joly de Fleury, since Attorney-General. It was nearly two o'clock. A little dinner was served, of which Canillac, Conflans, M. le Duc d'Orléans, and myself partook; and I will say this, by the way, I never dined with him but once since, namely, at Bagnolet.

We returned to the Parliament a little before four o'clock. I arrived there alone in my carriage, a moment before M. le Duc d'Orléans, and found everybody assembled. I was looked at with much curiosity, as it seemed to me. I am not aware if it was known whence I came. I took care that my bearing should say nothing. I simply said to the Duc de la Force that his advice had been salutary, that I had reason to hope all success from it, and that I had told M. le Duc d'Orléans whence it came. That Prince arrived, and (the hubbub inseparable from such a numerous suite being appeased) he said that matters must be recommenced from the point where they had been broken off in the morning; that it was his duty to say to the Court that in nothing had he agreed with M. du Maine and to bring again before all eyes the monstrous clauses

of a codicil, drawn from a dying prince; clauses much more strange than the dispositions of the testament that the Court had not deemed fit to be put in execution, and that the Court could not allow M. du Maine to be master of the person of the King, of the camp, of Paris, consequently of the State, of the person, life, and liberty of the Regent, whom he would be in a position to arrest at any moment as soon as he became the absolute and independent master of the civil and military household of the King; that the Court saw what must inevitably result from an unheard-of novelty, which placed everything in the hands of M. du Maine; and that he left it to the enlightenment, to the prudence, to the wisdom, to the equity of the company, and its love for the State, to declare what they thought on this subject.

M. du Maine appeared then as contemptible in the broad open daylight as he had appeared redoubtable in the obscurity of the cabinets. He had the look of one condemned, and his face, generally so fresh-coloured, was now as pale as death. He replied in a very low and scarcely intelligible voice, and with an air as respectful and as humble as it had been audacious in the morning.

People opined without listening to him; and tumultuously, but with one voice, the entire abrogation of the codicil was passed. This was premature, as the abrogation of the testament had been in the morning—both caused by sudden indignation. D'Agues-seau and Fleury both spoke, the first in a few words, the other at greater length, making a very good speech. As it exists, in the libraries, I will only say that the conclusions of both orators were in everything favourable to M. le Duc d'Orléans.

After they had spoken, the Duc du Maine, seeing himself totally shorn, tried a last resource. He rep-

resented, with more force than could have been expected from his demeanour at this second sitting, but yet with measure, that since he had been stripped of the authority confided to him by the codicil, he asked to be discharged from the responsibility of answering for the person of the King, and to be allowed simply to preserve the superintendence of his education. M. le Duc d'Orléans replied, "With all my heart, Monsieur; nothing more is wanted." Thereupon the Chief-President formally put the question to the vote.

A decree was passed by which all power was taken from the hands of M. du Maine and placed in those of the Regent, with the right of placing whom he pleased in the council; of dismissing anybody as it should seem good to him; and of doing all he might think fit respecting the form to be given to the government; authority over public affairs, nevertheless, to remain with the council, and decision to be taken by the plurality of votes, the vote of the Regent to count double in case of equal division; M. le Duc to be chief of the council under him, with the right to enter it at once and opine there.

During all this time, and until the end of the sitting, M. du Maine had his eyes always cast down, looked more dead than alive, and appeared motionless. His son and his brother gave no sign of taking interest in anything.

The decree was followed by loud acclamations of the crowd scattered outside, and that which filled the rest of the palace replied as soon as they learnt what had been decided.

This noise, which lasted some time, being appeased, the Regent thanked the company in brief, polished, and majestic terms; declared with what care he would employ for the good of the state, the authority with which he was invested; then said it was time he should

inform them what he judged ought to be established in order to aid him in the administration of affairs. He added that he did so with the more confidence, because what he proposed was exactly what M. le Duc de Bourgogne ('twas thus he named him) had resolved, as shown by papers found in his bureau. He passed a short and graceful eulogy upon the enlightenment and intentions of that prince; then declared that, besides the council of the regency, which would be the supreme centre from which all the affairs of the government would spring, he proposed to establish a council for foreign affairs, one for war, one for the navy, one for finance, one for ecclesiastical matters, and one for home affairs and to choose some of the magistrates of the company to enter these last two councils, and aid them by their knowledge upon the police of the realm, the jurisprudence, and what related to the liberties of the Gallican church.

The applause of the magistrates burst out at this, and all the crowd replied to it. The Chief-President concluded the sitting by a very short compliment to the Regent, who rose, and at the same time all the assembly, which then broke up.

On Friday, the 6th of September, 1715, the Regent performed an action of most exquisite merit, if it had been actuated by the love of God, but which was of the utmost meanness, religion having no connection with it. He went at eight o'clock in the morning to see Madame de Maintenon at Saint-Cyr. He was nearly an hour with this enemy, who had wished to cut off his head, and who quite recently had sought to deliver him, tied hand and foot, to M. du Maine, by the monstrous dispositions of the King's will and codicil.

The Regent assured her during this visit that the four thousand livres the King had given her every

month should be continued, and should be brought to her the first day of every month by the Duc de Noailles, who had apparently induced the Prince to pay this visit, and promise this present. He said to Madame de Maintenon that if she wished for more she had only to speak, and assured her he would protect Saint-Cyr. In leaving he was shown the young girls, all together in classes.

It must be remembered, that besides the estate of Maintenon, and the other property of this famous and fatal witch, the establishment of Saint-Cyr, which had more than four hundred thousand livres yearly income, and much money in reserve, was obliged by the rules which founded it, to receive Madame de Maintenon, if she wished to retire there; to obey her in all things, as the absolute and sole superior; to keep her and everybody connected with her, her domestics, her equipages, as she wished, her table, etc., at the expense of the house, all of which was very punctually done until her death. Thus she needed not this generous liberality, by which her pension of forty-eight thousand livres was continued to her. It would have been quite enough if M. le Duc d'Orléans had forgotten that she was in existence, and had simply left her untroubled in Saint-Cyr.

The Regent took good care not to inform me of his visit, before or after; and I took good care not to reproach him with it, or make him ashamed of it. It made much noise, and was not approved of. The Spanish affair was not yet forgotten, and the will and codicil furnished other matter for all conversations.

CHAPTER LXXX

SATURDAY, the 7th of September, was the day fixed for the first Bed of Justice of the King (Louis XV.); but he caught a cold during the night, and suffered a good deal. The Regent came alone to Paris. The Parliament had assembled, and I went to a door of the palace, where I was informed of the countermand which had just arrived. The Chief-President and the King's people were at once sent for to the Palais Royal, and the Parliament, which was about to adjourn, was continued for all the rest of the month for general business. On the morrow, the Regent, who was wearied with Versailles,—for he liked to live in Paris, where all his pleasures were within easy reach,—and who met with opposition from the Court doctors, all comfortably lodged at Versailles, to the removal of the person of the King to Vincennes, under pretext of a slight cold, fetched other doctors from Paris, who had been sent for to see the deceased King. These practitioners, who had nothing to gain by recommending Versailles, laughed at the Court doctors, and upon their opinion it was resolved to take the King to Vincennes, where all was ready for him on the morrow.

He set out, then, that day from Versailles, at about two o'clock in the day, in company with the Regent, the Duchesse de Ventadour, the Duc du Maine, and the Maréchal de Villeroy, passed round the ramparts of Paris, without entering the city, and arrived at Vincennes about five o'clock, many people and carriages having come out along the road to see him.

On the day after the arrival of the King at Vincennes, the Regent worked all the morning with all the Secretaries of State separately, whom he had charged to bring him the list of all the *lettres de cachet* issued from their bureaux, and a statement of the reasons for which they were delivered, as such oftentimes were slight. The majority of the *lettres de cachet* of exile and of imprisonment had been drawn up against Jansenists, and people who had opposed the constitution; numbers the reasons of which were known only to the deceased King, and to those who had induced him to grant them; others were of the time of previous ministers, and among them were many which had been long forgotten and unknown. The Regent restored everybody to liberty, exiles and prisoners, except those whom he knew to have been arrested for grave crimes, or affairs of State; and brought down infinite benedictions upon himself by this act of justice and humanity.

Many very singular and strange stories were then circulated, which showed the tyranny of the last reign, and of its ministers, and caused the misfortunes of the prisoners to be deplored. Among those in the Bastille was a man who had been imprisoned thirty-five years, arrested the day he arrived in Paris, on a journey from Italy, to which country he belonged. It has never been known why he was arrested, and he had never been examined, as was the case with the majority of the others. People were persuaded a mistake had been made. When his liberty was announced to him, he sadly asked what it was expected he could do with it. He said he had not a farthing; that he did not know a soul in Paris, not even a single street, or a person in all France; that his relatives in Italy had, doubtless, died since he left; that his property, doubtless, had been divided, so many years having elapsed during which no

news had been received from him; that he knew not what to do. He asked to be allowed to remain in the Bastille for the rest of his days, with food and lodging. This was granted, with as much liberty as he wished.

As for those who were taken from the dungeons where the hatred of the ministers, of the Jesuits, and of the *Constitution* chiefs, had cast them, the horrible state they appeared in terrified everybody, and rendered credible all the cruel stories which, as soon as they were fully at liberty, they revealed.

The same day on which this merciful decision was come to, died Madame de la Vieuville, not old, of a cancer in the breast, the existence of which she had concealed until two days before her death, and thus deprived herself of help.

A few days after, the finances being in such a bad state, the Regent made Crosat treasurer of the order, in return for which he obtained from him a loan of a million, in bars of silver, and the promise of another two million. Previous to this, the hunting establishments of the King had been much reduced. Now another retrenchment was made. There were seven intendants of the finances, who, for six hundred thousand livres, which their places had cost them, enjoyed eighty thousand livres each per annum. They were all suppressed, and simply the interest of their purchase-money paid to them; that is to say, thirty thousand livres each, until that purchase-money could be paid. It was found that there were sixteen hundred thousand francs owing to our ambassadors, and to our agents in foreign countries, the majority of whom literally had not enough to pay the postage of their letters, having spent all they possessed. This was a cruel discredit to us, all over Europe. I might fill a volume in treating upon the state and the arrangements of our finances. But this labour is above my strength,

and contrary to my taste. I will simply say that as soon as money could be spared it was sent to our ambassadors abroad. They were dying of hunger, were over head and ears in debt, had fallen into utter contempt, and our affairs were suffering accordingly.

The council of the regency, let me say here, was composed of the following persons: M. le Duc d'Orléans, M. le Duc, the Duc du Maine, the Comte de Toulouse, Voysin the Chancellor, myself—since I must name myself,—Maréchal de Villeroy, Maréchal d'Harcourt, Maréchal de Besons, the late Bishop of Troyes, and Torcy, with a right to vote; with La Vrillière, who kept the register, and Pontchartrain, both without the right to vote.

I have already alluded to the presence of Lord Stair at this time in our Court, as ambassador from England. By means of intrigues he had succeeded in ingratiating himself into the favour of the Regent, and in convincing him that the interests of France and England were identical. One of the reasons—the main one—which he brought forward to show this, was that King George was an usurper; and that if anything happened to our King, M. le Duc d'Orléans would become, in mounting the throne of France, an usurper also, the King of Spain being the real heir to the French monarchy; that, in consequence of this, France and England ought to march together, protect each other; France assisting England against the Pretender, and England assisting France, if need be, against the King of Spain. M. le Duc d'Orléans had too much penetration not to see this snare; but, marvellous as it may seem, the crookedness of this policy, and not the desire of reigning, seduced him. I am quite prepared, if ever these memoirs see the day, to find that this statement will be laughed at; that it will throw discredit on others, and cause me to be

regarded as a great ass, if I think to make my readers believe it; or for an idiot, if I have believed it myself. Nevertheless, such is the pure truth, to which I sacrifice all, in despite of what my readers may think of me. However incredible it may be, it is, as I say, the exact verity; and I do not hesitate to advance, that there are many such facts, unknown to history, which would much surprise if known; and which are unknown, only because scarcely any history has been written at first hand.

Stair wished, above all, to hinder the Regent from giving any assistance to the Pretender, and to prevent him passing through the realm in order to reach a seaport. Now the Regent was between two stools, for he had promised the Pretender to wink at his doings, and to favour his passage through France, if it were made secretly, and at the same time he had assented to the demand of Stair. Things had arrived at this pass when the troubles increased in England, and the Earl of Mar obtained some success in Scotland. Soon after news came that the Pretender had departed from Bar, and was making his way to the coast. Thereupon Stair ran in hot haste to M. le Duc d'Orléans to ask him to keep his promise, and hinder the Pretender's journey. The Regent immediately sent off Contade, major in the guards, very intelligent, and in whom he could trust, with his brother, a lieutenant in the same regiment, and two sergeants of their choice, to go to Château-Thierry, and wait for the Pretender, Stair having sure information that he would pass there. Contade set out at night on the 9th of November, well resolved and instructed to miss the person he was to seek. Stair, who expected as much, took also his measures, which were within an inch of succeeding; for this is what happened.

The Pretender set out disguised from Bar, accom-

panied by only three or four persons, and came to Chaillot, where M. de Lauzun had a little house, which he never visited, and which he had kept for mere fancy, although he had a house at Passy, of which he made much use. It was in this, Chaillot's house, that the Pretender put up, and where he saw the Queen, his mother, who often stopped at the Convent of the Filles de Sainte Marie Thérèse. Thence he set out in a post-chaise of Torcy's, by way of Alençon, for Brittany, where he meant to embark.

Stair discovered this scheme, and resolved to leave nothing undone in order to deliver his party of this, the last of the Stuarts. He quietly despatched different people by different roads, especially by that from Paris to Alençon. He charged with this duty Colonel Douglas (who belonged to the Irish (regiments) in the pay of France), who, under the protection of his name, and by his wit and his intrigues, had insinuated himself into many places in Paris since the commencement of the regency; had placed himself on a footing of consideration and of familiarity with the Regent; and often came to my house. He was good company; had married upon the frontier of Metz; was very poor; had politeness and much experience of the world; the reputation of distinguished valour; and nothing which could render him suspected of being capable of a crime.

Douglas got into a post-chaise, accompanied by two horsemen; all three were well armed, and posted leisurely along this road. Nonancourt is a kind of little village upon this route, at nineteen leagues from Paris; between Dreux, three leagues further, and Verneuil au Perche, four leagues this side. It was at Nonancourt that he alighted, ate a morsel at the post-house, inquired with extreme solicitude after a post-chaise which he described, as well as the manner in which

it would be accompanied, expressed fear lest it had already passed, and lest he had not been answered truly. After infinite inquiries, he left a third horseman, who had just reached him, on guard, with orders to inform him when the chaise he was in search of appeared; and added menaces and promises of recompense to the post people, so as not to be deceived by their negligence.

The post-master was named L'Hospital; he was absent, but his wife was in the house, and she fortunately was a very honest woman, who had wit, sense, and courage. Nonancourt is only five leagues from La Ferté, and when, to save distance, you do not pass there, they send you relays upon the road. Thus I knew very well this post-mistress, who mixed herself more in the business than her husband, and who has herself related to me this adventure more than once. She did all she could, uselessly, to obtain some explanation upon these alarms. All that she could unravel was that the strangers were Englishmen, and in a violent excitement about something,—that something very important was at stake,—and that they meditated mischief. She fancied thereupon that the Pretender was in question; resolved to save him; mentally arranged her plans, and fortunately enough executed them.

In order to succeed she devoted herself to the service of these gentlemen, refused them nothing, appeared quite satisfied, and promised that they should infallibly be informed. She persuaded them of this so thoroughly, that Douglas went away without saying where, except to this third horseman just arrived, but it was close at hand, so that he might be warned in time. He took one of his valets with him; the other remained with the horseman to wait and watch.

Another man much embarrassed the post-mistress; nevertheless, she laid her plans. She proposed to the

horseman to drink something, because when he arrived Douglas had left the table. She served him in her best manner, and with her best wine, and kept him at table as long as she could, anticipating all his orders. She had placed a valet, in whom she could trust, as guard, with orders simply to appear, without a word, if he saw a chaise; and her resolution was to lock up the Englishman and his servant, and to give their horses to the chaise if it came. But it came not, and the Englishman grew tired of stopping at table. Then she manœuvred so well that she persuaded him to go and lie down, and to count upon her, her people, and upon the valet Douglas had left. The Englishman told this valet not to quit the threshold of the house, and to inform him as soon as the chaise appeared. He then suffered himself to be led to the back of the house, in order to lie down. The post-mistress, immediately after, goes to one of her friends in a by-street, relates her adventure and her suspicions, makes the friend agree to receive and secrete in her dwelling the person she expected, sends for an ecclesiastic, a relative of them both, and in whom she could repose confidence, who came and lent an Abbé's dress and wig to match. This done, Madame L'Hospital returns to her home, finds the English valet at the door, talks with him, pities his ennui, says he is a good fellow to be so particular, says that from the door to the house there is but one step, promises him that he shall be as well informed as by his own eyes, presses him to drink something, and tips the wink to a trusty postilion, who makes him drink until he rolls dead drunk under the table. During this performance, the wary mistress listens at the door of the English gentleman's room, gently turns the key and locks him in, and then establishes herself upon the threshold of her door.

Half an hour after comes the trusty valet whom she

had put on guard: it was the expected chaise, which, as well as the three men who accompanied it, were made, without knowing why, to slacken speed. It was King James. Madame L'Hospital accosts him, says he is expected, and lost if he does not take care; but that he may trust in her and follow her. At once they both go to her friends. There he learns all that has happened, and they hide him, and the three men of his suite as well as they could. Madame L'Hospital returns home, sends for the officers of justice, and in consequence of her suspicions she causes the English gentleman and the English valet, the one drunk, the other asleep, locked in the room where she had left him, to be arrested, and immediately after despatches a postilion to Torcy. The officers of justice act, and send their deposition to the Court.

The rage of the English gentleman on finding himself arrested, and unable to execute the duty which led him there, and his fury against the valet who had allowed himself to be intoxicated, cannot be expressed. As for Madame L'Hospital he would have strangled her if he could; and she for a long time was afraid of her life.

The Englishman could not be induced to confess what brought him there, or where was Douglas, whom he named in order to show his importance. He declared he had been sent by the English ambassador, though Stair had not yet officially assumed that title, and exclaimed that that minister would never suffer the affront he had received. They civilly replied to him, that there were no proofs he came from the English ambassador,—none that he was connected with the minister: that very suspicious designs against public safety on the highway alone were visible; that no harm or annoyance should be caused him, but that he must remain in safety until orders came, and there-

upon he was civilly led to prison, as well as the intoxicated valet.

What became of Douglas at that time was never known, except that he was recognised in various places, running, inquiring, crying out with despair that *he* had escaped, without mentioning any name. Apparently news came to him, or he sought it, being tired of receiving none. The report of what had occurred in such a little place as Nonancourt would easily have reached him, close as he was to it; and perhaps it made him set out anew to try and catch his prey.

But he journeyed in vain. King James had remained hidden at Nonancourt, where, charmed with the attentions of his generous post-mistress, who had saved him from his assassins, he admitted to her who he was, and gave her a letter for the Queen, his mother. He remained there three days, to allow the hubbub to pass, and rob those who sought him of all hope; then, disguised as an Abbé, he jumped into a post-chaise that Madame L'Hospital had borrowed in the neighbourhood—to confound all identity—and continued his journey, during which he was always pursued, but happily was never recognised, and embarked in Brittany for Scotland.

Douglas, tired of useless searches, returned to Paris, where Stair kicked up a fine dust about the Nonancourt adventure. This he denominated nothing less than an infraction of the law of nations, with an extreme audacity and impudence, and Douglas, who could not be ignorant of what was said about him, had the hardihood to go about everywhere as usual; to show himself at the theatre; and to present himself before M. le Duc d'Orléans.

This Prince ignored as much as he could a plot so cowardly and so barbarous, and in respect to him so insolent. He kept silence, said to Stair what he judged

fitting to make him be silent likewise, but gave liberty to his English assassins. Douglas, however, fell much in the favour of the Regent, and many considerable people closed their doors to him. He vainly tried to force mine. But as for me I was a perfect Jacobite, and quite persuaded that it was the interest of France to give England domestic occupation, which would long hinder her from thinking of foreign matters. I then, as may be supposed, could not look upon the odious enterprise with a favourable eye, or pardon its authors. Douglas complained to me of my disregard for him, but to no purpose. Soon after he disappeared from Paris. I know not what became of him afterwards. His wife and his children remained there living by charity. A long time after his death beyond the seas, the Abbé de Saint-Simon passed from Noyan to Metz, where he found his widow in great misery.

The Queen of England sent for Madame L'Hospital to Saint-Germain, thanked her, caressed her, as she deserved, and gave her her portrait. This was all; the Regent gave her nothing; a long while after King James wrote to her, and sent her also his portrait. Conclusion: she remained post-mistress of Nonancourt as before, twenty or twenty-five years after, to her death; and her son and her daughter-in-law keep the post now. She was a true woman; estimated in her neighbourhood; not a single word that she uttered concerning this history has been contradicted by any one. What it cost her can never be said, but she never received a farthing. She never complained, but spoke as she found things, with modesty, and without seeking to speak. Such is the indigence of dethroned Kings, and their complete forgetfulness of the greatest perils and the most signal services.

Many honest people avoided Stair, whose insolent

airs made others avoid him. He filled the cup by the insupportable manner in which he spoke upon that affair, never daring to admit he had directed it, or deigning to disculpate himself. The only annoyance he showed was about his ill-success.

CHAPTER LXXXI

I MUST say a few words now of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who, as may be imagined, began to hold her head very high indeed directly the regency of Monsieur her father was established. Despite the representations of Madame de Saint-Simon, she usurped all the honours of a queen; she went through Paris with kettle-drums beating, and all along the quay of the Tuileries where the King was. The Maréchal de Villeroy complained of this next day to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who promised him that while the King remained in Paris no kettle-drums should be heard but his. Never afterwards did Madame la Duchesse de Berry have any, yet when she went to the theatre she sat upon a raised daïs in her box, had four of her guards upon the stage, and others in the pit; the house was better lighted than usual, and before the commencement of the performance she was harangued by the players. This made a strange stir in Paris, and as she did not dare to continue it she gave up her usual place, and took at the opera a little box where she could scarcely be seen, and where she was almost incognito. As the comedy was played then upon the opera stage for Madame, this little box served for both entertainments.

The Duchess desired apparently to pass the summer nights in all liberty in the garden of the Luxembourg. She accordingly had all the gates walled up but one, by which the Faubourg Saint-Germain, which had always enjoyed the privilege of walking there, were much deprived. M. le Duc thereupon opened the Conti gar-

den to make up to the public for their loss. As may be imagined, strange things were said about the motives which led to the walling up of the garden.

As the Princess found new lovers to replace the old ones, she tried to pension off the latter at the expense of the public. She had a place created expressly for La Haye. She bought, or rather the King for her, a little house at the entry of the Bois de Boulogne, which was pretty, with all the wood in front, and a fine garden behind. It was called La Muette.

After many amours she had become smitten with Rion, a younger son of the house of Aydic. He was a fat, chubby, pale little fellow, who had so many pimples that he did not ill resemble an abscess. He had good teeth, but had no idea he should cause a passion which in less than no time became ungovernable, and which lasted a long while without however interfering with temporary and passing amours. He was not worth a penny, but had many brothers and sisters who had no more than he. He was a lieutenant of dragoons, relative of Madame Pons, dame d'atours of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who sent for him to try and do something for him. Scarcely had he arrived than the passion of the Duchess declared itself, and he became the master of the Luxembourg where she dwelt. M. de Lauzun, who was a distant relative, was delighted, and chuckled inwardly. He thought he saw a repetition of the old times, when Mademoiselle was in her glory; he vouchsafed his advice to Rion.

Rion was gentle and naturally polished and respectful, a good and honest fellow. He soon felt the power of his charms, which could only have captivated the incomprehensible and depraved fantasy of such a princess. He did not abuse this power; made himself liked by everybody; but he treated Madame la Duchesse de

Berry as M. de Lauzun had treated Mademoiselle. He was soon decorated with the most beautiful lace and the richest clothes covered with silver, loaded with snuff-boxes, jewels, and precious stones. He took pleasure in making the Princess long after him, and be jealous; affecting to be still more jealous of her. He often made her cry. Little by little, he obtained such authority over her that she did not dare to do anything without his permission, not even the most indifferent things. If she were ready to go to the opera, he made her stay away; at other times he made her go thither in spite of herself. He made her treat well many ladies she did not like, or of whom she was jealous, and treat ill persons who pleased her, but of whom he pretended to be jealous. Even in her finery she had not the slightest liberty. He amused himself by making her disarrange her head-dress, or change her clothes, when she was quite dressed; and that so often and so publicly, that he accustomed her at last to take over night his orders for her morning's dress and occupation, and on the morrow he would change everything, and the Princess wept as much as she could, and more. At last she actually sent messages to him by trusty valets,—for he lived close to the Luxembourg,—several times during her toilet, to know what ribbons she should wear; the same with her gown and other things; and nearly always he made her wear what she did not wish for. If ever she dared to do the least thing without his permission, he treated her like a serving-wench, and her tears lasted sometimes several days. This princess, so haughty, and so fond of showing and exercising the most unmeasured pride, disgraced herself by joining in repasts with him and obscure people; she, with whom no man could lawfully eat if he were not a prince of the blood!

A Jesuit, named Père Riglet, whom she had known

as a child, and whose intimacy she had always cultivated since, was admitted to these private repasts, without being ashamed thereof, and without Madame la Duchesse de Berry being embarrassed. Madame de Mouchy was the confidante of all these strange parties: she and Rion invited the guests, and chose the days. La Mouchy often reconciled the Princess to her lover, and was better treated by him than she, without her daring to take notice of it, for fear of an éclat which would have caused her to lose so dear a lover, and a confidante so necessary. This life was public; everybody at the Luxembourg paid court to M. de Rion, who, on his side, took care to be on good terms with all the world, nay, with an air of respect that he refused, even in public, to his princess. He often gave sharp replies to her in society, which made people lower their eyes, and brought blushes to the cheek of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who, nevertheless, did not attempt to conceal her submission and passionate manners, even before others. A remarkable fact is, that in the midst of this life, she took an apartment at the Convent of the Carmelites of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where she sometimes went in the afternoon, always slept there on grand religious fête days, and often remained there several days running. She took with her two ladies, rarely three, scarcely a single domestic; she ate with her ladies what the convent could supply for her table; attended the services, was sometimes long in prayer, and rigidly fasted on the appointed days.

Two Carmelites, of much talent, and who knew the world, were charged to receive her, and to be near her. One was very beautiful: the other had been so. They were rather young, especially the handsomer, but were very religious and holy, and performed the office entrusted to them much against their inclination. When

they became more familiar they spoke freely to the Princess, and said to her that if they knew nothing of her but what they saw, they should admire her as a saint, but, elsewhere, they learnt that she led a strange life, and so public, that they could not comprehend why she came to their convent. Madame la Duchesse de Berry laughed at this, and was not angry. Sometimes they lectured her, called people and things by their names, and exhorted her to change so scandalous a life; but it was all in vain. She lived as before, both at the Luxembourg and at the Carmelites, and caused wonderment by this surprising conduct.

Madame la Duchesse de Berry returned with usury to her father, the severity and the domination she suffered at the hands of Rion—yet this prince, in his weakness, was not less submissive to her, attentive to her, or afraid of her. He was afflicted with the public reign of Rion, and the scandal of his daughter; but he did not dare to breathe a word, or if he did (after some scene, as ridiculous as it was violent, had passed between the lover and the Princess, and become public), he was treated like a negro, pouted at several days, and did not know how to make his peace.

But it is time now to speak of the public and private occupations of the Regent himself, of his conduct, his pleasure parties, and the employment of his days.

Up to five o'clock in the evening he devoted himself exclusively to public business, reception of ministers, councils, etc., never dining during the day, but taking chocolate between two and three o'clock, when everybody was allowed to enter his room. After the council of the day, that is to say, at about five o'clock, there was no more talk of business. It was now the time of the Opera or the Luxembourg (if he had not been to the latter place before his chocolate), or he went to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans' apartments, or

supped, or went out privately, or received company privately; or, in the fine season, he went to Saint-Cloud, or elsewhere out of town, now supping there, or at the Luxembourg, or at home. When Madame was at Paris, he spoke to her for a moment before his mass; and when she was at Saint-Cloud he went to see her there, and always paid her much attention and respect.

His suppers were always in very strange company. His mistresses, sometimes an opera girl, often Madame la Duchesse de Berry, and a dozen men whom he called his *roués,* formed the party. The requisite cheer was prepared in places made expressly, on the same floor, all the utensils were of silver; the company often lent a hand to the cooks. It was at these parties that the character of every one was passed in review, ministers and favourites like the rest, with a liberty which was unbridled license. The gallantries past and present of the Court and of the town; all old stories, disputes, jokes, absurdities were raked up; nobody was spared; M. le Duc d'Orléans had his say like the rest, but very rarely did these discourses make the slightest impression upon him. The company drank as much as they could, inflamed themselves, said the filthiest things without stint, uttered impieties with emulation, and when they had made a good deal of noise and were very drunk, they went to bed to recommence the same game the next day. From the moment when supper was ready, business, no matter of what importance, no matter whether private or national, was entirely banished from view. Until the next morning everybody and everything were compelled to wait.

The Regent lost then an infinite amount of time in private, in amusements, and debauchery. He lost much also in audiences too long, too extended, too easily granted, and drowned himself in those same de-

tails which during the lifetime of the late King we had both so often reproached him with. Questions he might have decided in half an hour he prolonged, sometimes from weakness, sometimes from that miserable desire to set people at loggerheads, and that poisonous maxim which occasionally escaped him or his favourite, *divide et impera;* often from his general mistrust of everybody and everything; nothings became hydras with which he himself afterwards was much embarrassed. His familiarity and his readiness of access extremely pleased people, but were much abused. Folks sometimes were even wanting in respect to him, which at last was an inconvenience all the more dangerous because he could not, when he wished, reprimand those who embarrassed him; insomuch as they themselves did not feel embarrassed.

What is extraordinary is, neither his mistress nor Madame la Duchesse de Berry, nor his *roués,* could ever draw anything from him, even when drunk, concerning the affairs of the government, however important. He publicly lived with Madame de Parabère; he lived at the same time with others; he amused himself with the jealousy and vexation of these women; he was not the less on good terms with them all; and the scandal of this public seraglio, and that of the daily filthiness and impiety at his suppers, were extreme and spread everywhere.

Towards the end of the year (1715) the Chevalier de Bouillon, who since the death of the son of the Comte d'Auvergne had taken the name of the Prince d'Auvergne, proposed to the Regent that there should be a public ball, masked and unmasked, in the opera three times a week, people to pay upon entering, and the boxes to be thrown open to those who did not care to dance. It was believed that a public ball, guarded as is the opera on days of performance, would

prevent those adventures which happened so often at the little obscure balls scattered throughout Paris; and indeed close them altogether. The opera balls were established on a grand scale, and with all possible effect. The proposer of the idea had for it six thousand livres pension; and a machine admirably invented and of easy and instantaneous application, was made to cover the orchestra, and put the stage and the pit on the same level. The misfortune was, that the opera was at the Palais Royal, and that M. le Duc d'Orléans had only one step to take to reach it after his suppers and show himself there, often in a state but little becoming. The Duc de Noailles, who strove to pay court to him, went there from the commencement so drunk that there was no indecency he did not commit.

CHAPTER LXXXII

LET me speak now of another matter.

A Scotchman, I do not know of what family, a great player and combiner, who had gained much in various countries he had been in, had come to Paris during the last days of the deceased King. His name was Law; but when he became more known, people grew so accustomed to call him *Las,* that his name of Law disappeared. He was spoken of to M. le Duc d'Orléans as a man deep in banking and commercial matters, in the movements of the precious metals, in monies and finance: the Regent, from this description, was desirous to see him. He conversed with Law some time, and was so pleased with him, that he spoke of him to Desmarets as a man from whom information was to be drawn. I recollect that the Prince spoke of him to me at the same time. Desmarets sent for Law, and was a long while with him several times; I know nothing of what passed between them or its results, except that Desmarets was pleased with Law, and formed some esteem for him.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, after that, only saw him from time to time; but after the first rush of affairs, which followed the death of the King, Law, who had formed some subaltern acquaintances at the Palais Royal, and an intimacy with the Abbé Dubois, presented himself anew before M. le Duc d'Orléans, soon after conversed with him in private, and proposed some finance plans to him. The Regent made him work with the Duc de Noailles, with Rouillé, with Amelot—this last for com-

mercial matters. The first two were afraid of an intruder, favoured by the Regent, in their administration; so that Law was a long time tossed about, but was always backed by the Duc d'Orléans. At last, the bank project pleased that Prince so much that he wished to carry it out. He spoke in private to the heads of finance, in whom he found great opposition. He had often spoken to me of it, and I had contented myself with listening to him upon a matter I never liked, and which, consequently, I never well understood; and the carrying out of which appeared to me distant. When he had entirely formed his resolution, he summoned a financial and commercial assembly, in which Law explained the whole plan of the bank he wished to establish (this was on the 24th of October, 1715). He was listened to as long as he liked to talk. Some, who saw that the Regent was almost decided, acquiesced; but the majority opposed.

Law was not disheartened. The majority were spoken to privately in very good French. Nearly the same assembly was called, in which, the Regent being present, Law again explained his project. This time few opposed and feebly. The Duc de Noailles was obliged to give in. The bank being approved of in this manner, it had next to be proposed to the regency council.

M. le Duc d'Orléans took the trouble to speak in private to each member of the council, and gently to make them understand that he wished the bank to meet with no opposition. He spoke his mind to me thoroughly: therefore a reply was necessary. I said to him that I did not hide my ignorance or my disgust for all finance matters; that, nevertheless, what he had just explained to me appeared good in itself, that without any new tax, without expense, and without wronging or embarrassing anybody, money should

double itself at once by means of the notes of this bank, and become transferable with the greatest facility. But along with this advantage I found two inconveniences, the first, how to govern the bank with sufficient foresight and wisdom, so as not to issue more notes than could be paid whenever presented: the second, that what is excellent in a republic, or in a monarchy where the finance is entirely popular, as in England, is of pernicious use in an absolute monarchy, such as France, where the necessities of a war badly undertaken and ill sustained, the avarice of a first minister, favourite, or mistress, the luxury, the wild expenses, the prodigality of a King, might soon exhaust a bank, and ruin all the holders of notes, that is to say, overthrow the realm. M. le Duc d'Orléans agreed to this; but at the same time maintained that a King would have so much interest in never meddling or allowing minister, mistress, or favourite to meddle with the bank, that this capital inconvenience was never to be feared. Upon that we for a long time disputed without convincing each other, so that when, some few days afterwards, he proposed the bank to the regency council, I gave my opinion as I have just explained it, but with more force and at length: and my conclusion was to reject the bank, as a bait the most fatal, in an absolute country, while in a free country it would be a very good and very wise establishment.

Few dared to be of this opinion: the bank passed. M. le Duc d'Orléans cast upon me some little reproaches, but gentle, for having spoken at such length. I based my excuses upon my belief that by duty, honour, and conscience, I ought to speak according to my persuasion, after having well thought over the matter, and explained myself sufficiently to make my opinion well understood, and the reason I had for forming it. Immediately after, the edict was regis-

tered without difficulty at the Parliament. This assembly sometimes knew how to please the Regent with good grace in order to turn the cold shoulder to him afterwards with more efficacy.

Some time after, to relate all at once, M. le Duc d'Orléans wished me to see Law in order that he might explain to me his plans, and asked me to do so as a favour. I represented to him my unskilfulness in all finance matters; that Law would in vain speak a language to me of which I understood nothing, that we should both lose our time very uselessly. I tried to back out thus, as well as I could. The Regent several times reverted to the charge, and at last demanded my submission. Law came then to my house. Though there was much of the foreigner in his bearing, in his expressions, and in his accent, he expressed himself in very good terms, with much clearness and precision. He conversed with me a long while upon his bank, which, indeed, was an excellent thing in itself, but for another country rather than for France, and with a prince less easy than the Regent. Law had no other solutions to give me, of my two objections, than those the Regent himself had given, which did not satisfy me. But as the affair had passed, and there was nothing now to do but well direct it, principally upon that did our conversation turn. I made him feel as much as I could the importance of not showing such facility, that it might be abused, with a Regent so good, so easy, so open, so surrounded. I masked as well as I could what I wished to make him understand thereupon; and I dwelt especially upon the necessity of being prepared to satisfy instantly all bearers of notes, who should demand payment: for upon this depended the credit or the overthrow of the bank. Law, on going out, begged me to permit him to come sometimes and talk with me; we separated

mutually satisfied, at which the Regent was still more so.

Law came several other times to my house, and showed much desire to grow intimate with me. I kept to civilities, because finance entered not into my head, and I regarded as lost time all these conversations. Some time after, the Regent, who spoke to me tolerably often of Law with great prepossession, said that he had to ask of me, nay to demand of me, a favour; it was, to receive a visit from Law regularly every week. I represented to him the perfect inutility of these conversations, in which I was incapable of learning anything, and still more so of enlightening Law upon subjects he possessed, and of which I knew naught. It was in vain; the Regent wished it; obedience was necessary. Law, informed of this by the Regent, came then to my house. He admitted to me with good grace, that it was he who had asked the Regent to ask me, not daring to do so himself. Many compliments followed on both sides, and we agreed that he should come to my house every Tuesday morning about ten o'clock, and that my door should be closed to everybody while he remained. This first visit was not given to business. On the following Tuesday morning he came to keep his appointment, and punctually came until his discomfiture. An hour-and-a-half, very often two hours, was the ordinary time for our conversations. He always took care to inform me of the favour his bank was obtaining in France and foreign countries, of its products, of his views, of his conduct, of the opposition he met with from the heads of finance and the magistracy, of his reasons, and especially of his balance sheet, to convince me that he was more than prepared to face all holders of notes whatever sums they had to ask for.

I soon knew that if Law had desired these regular

visits at my house, it was not because he expected to make me a skilful financier; but because, like a man of sense—and he had a good deal—he wished to draw near a servitor of the Regent who had the best post in his confidence, and who long since had been in a position to speak to him of everything and of everybody with the greatest freedom and the most complete liberty; to try by this frequent intercourse to gain my friendship; inform himself by me of the intrinsic qualities of those of whom he only saw the outside; and by degrees to come to the Council, through me, to represent the annoyances he experienced, the people with whom he had to do; and lastly, to profit by my dislike to the Duc de Noailles, who, whilst embracing him every day, was dying of jealousy and vexation, and raised in his path, under-hand, all the obstacles and embarrassments possible, and would have liked to stifle him. The bank being in action and flourishing, I believed it my duty to sustain it. I lent myself, therefore, to the instructions Law proposed, and soon we spoke to each other with a confidence I never have had reason to repent. I will not enter into the details of this bank, the other schemes which followed it, or the operations made in consequence. This subject of finance would fill several volumes. I will speak of it only as it affects the history of the time, or what concerns me in particular. It is the history of my time I have wished to write; I should have been too much turned from it had I entered into the immense details respecting finance. I might add here what Law was. I defer it to a time when this curiosity will be more in place.

Arouet, son of a notary, who was employed by my father and me until his death, was exiled and sent to Tulle at this time (the early part of 1716), for some verses very satirical and very impudent. I should not

amuse myself by writing down such a trifle, if this same Arouet, having become a great poet and academician under the name of Voltaire, had not also become—after many tragical adventures—a manner of personage in the republic of letters, and even achieved a sort of importance among certain people.

CHAPTER LXXXIII

I HAVE elsewhere alluded to Alberoni, and shown what filthy baseness he stooped to in order to curry favour with the infamous Duc de Vendôme. I have also shown that he accompanied the new Queen of Spain from Parma to Madrid, after she had been married, by procuration, to Philip V. He arrived at the Court of Spain at a most opportune moment for his fortune. Madame des Ursins had just been disgraced; there was no one to take her place. Alberoni saw his opportunity and was not slow to avail himself of it. During the journey with the new Queen, he had contrived to ingratiate himself so completely into her favour, that she was, in a measure, prepared to see only with his eyes. The King had grown so accustomed to be shut out from all the world, and to be ruled by others, that he easily adapted himself to his new chains. The Queen and Alberoni, then, in a short time had him as completely under their thumb, as he had before been under that of Madame des Ursins.

Alberoni, unscrupulous and ambitious, stopped at nothing in order to consolidate his power and pave the way for his future greatness. Having become prime minister, he kept the King as completely inaccessible to the courtiers as to the world; would allow no one to approach him whose influence he had in any way feared. He had Philip completely in his own hands by means of the Queen, and was always on his guard to keep him there.

Ever since the Regent's accession to power an intimacy had gradually been growing up between the two

governments of France and England. This was mainly owing to the intrigues of the Abbé Dubois, who had sold himself to the English Court, from which he secretly received an enormous pension. He was, therefore, devoted heart and soul—if such a despicable personage can be said to have the one or the other—to the interests of King George, and tried to serve them in every way. He had but little difficulty—comparatively speaking—in inducing M. le Duc d'Orléans to fall into his nets, and to declare himself in favour of an English alliance. Negotiations with this end in view were, in fact, set on foot, had been for some time; and about the month of September of this year (1716), assumed a more smiling face than they had yet displayed.

Both France and England, from different motives, wished to draw Spain into this alliance. The Regent, therefore, in order to further this desire, obtained from England a promise that she would give up Gibraltar to its former owners, the Spaniards. The King of England consented to do so, but on one condition: it was, that in order not to expose himself to the cries of the party opposed to him, this arrangement should be kept profoundly secret until executed. In order that this secrecy might be secured, he stipulated that the negotiation should not in any way pass through the hands of Alberoni, or any Spanish minister, but be treated directly between the Regent and the King of Spain, through a confidential agent chosen by the former.

This confidential agent was to take a letter respecting the treaty to the King of Spain, a letter full of insignificant trifles, and at the same time a positive order from the King of England, written and signed by his hand, to the Governor of Gibraltar, commanding him to surrender the place to the King of Spain

the very moment he received this order, and to retire with his garrison, etc., to Tangiers. In order to execute this a Spanish general was suddenly to march to Gibraltar, under pretence of repressing the incursions of its garrison,—summon the Governor to appear, deliver to him the King of England's order, and enter into possession of the place. All this was very weakly contrived; but this concerned the King of England, not us.

I must not be proud; and must admit that I knew nothing of all this, save at second-hand. If I had, without pretending to be very clever, I must say that I should have mistrusted this fine scheme. The King of England could not be ignorant with what care and with what jealousy the Queen and Alberoni kept the King of Spain locked up, inaccessible to everybody—and that the certain way to fail, was to try to speak to him without their knowledge, in spite of them, or unaided by them. However, my opinion upon this point was not asked, and accordingly was not given.

Louville was the secret agent whom the Regent determined to send. He had already been in Spain, had gained the confidence of the King, and knew him better than any other person who could have been chosen. Precisely because of all these reasons, I thought him the most unfit person to be charged with this commission. The more intimate he had been with the King of Spain, the more firm in his confidence, the more would he be feared by the Queen and Alberoni; and the more would they do to cover his embassy with failure, so as to guard their credit and their authority. I represented my views on this subject to Louville, who acknowledged there was truth in them, but contented himself with saying, that he had not in his surprise dared to refuse the mission offered to him; and that if he succeeded in it, the restitution to Spain of such

an important place as Gibraltar, would doubtless be the means of securing to him large arrears of pensions due to him from Philip the First: an object of no small importance in his eyes. Louville, therefore, in due time departed to Madrid, on his strange and secret embassy.

Upon arriving he went straight to the house of the Duc de Saint-Aignan, our ambassador, and took up his quarters there. Saint-Aignan who had received not the slightest information of his arriving, was surprised beyond measure at it. Alberoni was something more than surprised. As fortune would have it, Louville when at some distance from Madrid was seen by a courier, who straightway told Alberoni of the circumstance. As may be imagined, tormented as Alberoni was by jealousy and suspicion, this caused him infinite alarm. He was quite aware who Louville was; the credit he had attained with the King of Spain; the trouble Madame des Ursins and the deceased Queen had had to get him out of their way; the fear, therefore, that he conceived on account of this unexpected arrival, was so great that he passed all bounds, in order to free himself from it.

He instantly despatched a courier to meet Louville with an order prohibiting him to approach any nearer to Madrid. The courier missed Louville, but a quarter of an hour after this latter had alighted at Saint-Aignan's, he received a note from Grimaldo inclosing an order from the King of Spain, commanding him to leave the city that instant! Louville replied that he was charged with a confidential letter from the King of France, and with another from M. le Duc d'Orléans, for the King of Spain; and with a commission for his Catholic Majesty which would not permit him to leave until he had executed it. In consequence of this reply, a courier was at once despatched to the Prince de

Cellamare, Spanish ambassador at Paris, ordering him to ask for the recall of Louville, and to declare that the King of Spain so disliked his person that he would neither see him, nor allow him to treat with any of the ministers!

Meanwhile the fatigue of the journey followed by such a reception so affected Louville, that during the night he had an attack of a disease to which he was subject, so that he had a bath prepared for him, into which he got towards the end of the morning.

Alberoni, not satisfied with what he had already done, came himself to the Duc de Saint-Aignan's, in order to persuade Louville to depart at once. Despite the representations made to him, he insisted upon penetrating to the sick-chamber. There he saw Louville in his bath. Nothing could be more civil than the words of Alberoni, but nothing could be more dry, more negative, or more absolute than their signification. He pitied the other's illness and the fatigue of his journey; would have wished to have known of this journey beforehand, so as to have prevented it; and had hoped to be able to overcome the repugnance of the King of Spain to see him, or at least to obtain permission for him to remain some days in Madrid. He added that he had been unable to shake his Majesty in any way, or to avoid obeying the very express order he had received from him, to see that he (Louville) departed at once.

Louville, however, was in a condition which rendered his departure impossible. Alberoni admitted this, but warned him that his stay must only last as long as his illness, and that the attack once over, he must away. Louville insisted upon the confidential letters, of which he was the bearer, and which gave him an official character, instructed as he was to execute an important commission from the King of

France, nephew of the King of Spain, such as his Majesty could not refuse to hear direct from his mouth, and such as he would regret not having listened to. The dispute was long and warm, despite the illness of Louville, who could gain nothing. He did not fail to remain five or six days with the Duc de Saint-Aignan, and to make him act as ambassador in order to obtain an audience of the King, although Saint-Aignan was hurt at being kept ignorant of the object of the other's mission.

Louville did not dare to call upon a soul, for fear of committing himself, and nobody dared to call upon him. He hazarded, however, for curiosity, to go and see the King of Spain pass through a street, and ascertain if, on espying him, he would not be tempted to hear him, in case his arrival, as was very possible, had been kept a secret. But Alberoni had anticipated everything. Louville saw the King pass, certainly, but found it was impossible to make himself perceived by his Majesty. Grimaldo came afterwards to intimate to Louville an absolute order to depart, and to inform the Duc de Saint-Aignan that the King of Spain was so angry with the obstinacy of this delay, that he would not say what might happen if the stay of Louville was protracted; but that he feared the respect due to a representative minister, and above all an ambassador of France, would be disregarded.

Both Louville and Saint-Aignan clearly saw that all audience was impossible, and that in consequence a longer stay could only lead to disturbances which might embroil the two crowns; so that, at the end of seven or eight days, Louville departed, returning as he came. Alberoni began then to breathe again after the extreme fear he had had. He was consoled by this proof of his power, which showed he need no longer fear that any one could approach the King without his

aid, or that any business could be conducted without him. Thus Spain lost Gibraltar, and she has never been able to recover it since.

Such is the utility of prime ministers!

Alberoni spread the report in Spain and in France, that Philip V. had taken a mortal aversion against Louville, since he had driven him out of the country for his insolence and his scheming; that he would never see him, and was offended because he had passed the Pyrenees; that Louville had no proposition to make, or commission to execute; that he had deceived the Regent, in making him believe that if once he found a pretext for appearing before the King of Spain, knowing him so well as he did, that prince would be ravished by the memory of his former affection, would reinstate him in his former credit, and thus France would be able to make Spain do all she wished. In a word, Alberoni declared that Louville had only come into the country to try and obtain some of the pensions he had been promised on quitting the King of Spain, but that he had not gone the right way to work to be so soon paid.

Nothing short of the effrontery of Alberoni would have been enough for the purpose of spreading these impostures. No one had forgotten in Spain what Madame des Ursins had done to get rid of Louville,—how the King of Spain had resisted; that she was not able to succeed without the aid of France and her intrigues with Madame de Maintenon; and that the King, afflicted to the utmost, yielding to the orders given by France to Louville, had doubled the pensions which had for a long time been paid to him, given him a sum of money in addition, and the government of Courtray, which he lost only by the misfortune of the war that followed the loss of the battle of Ramillies. With respect to the commission, to deny it was an

extreme piece of impudence, a man being concerned so well known as Louville, who descends at the house of the ambassador of France, says he has letters of trust from the King and the Regent, and an important mission which he can only confide to the King of Spain, the salf-same ambassador striving to obtain an audience for him. Nothing was so easy as to cover Louville with confusion, if he had spoken falsely, by making him show his letters; if he had none he would have been struck dumb, and having no official character, Alberoni would have been free to punish him. Even if with confidential letters, he had only a complaint to utter in order to introduce himself and to solicit his pay, Alberoni would very easily have been able to dishonour him, because he had no commission after having roundly asserted that he was charged with one of great importance. But omnipotence says and does with impunity whatever it pleases.

Louville having returned, it was necessary to send word to the King of England of all he had done in Spain; and this business came to nothing, except that it set Alberoni against the Regent for trying to execute a secret commission without his knowledge; and that it set the Regent against Alberoni for frustrating a project so openly, and for showing the full force of his power. Neither of the two ever forgot this matter; and the dislike of Alberoni to the Regent led, as will be seen, to some strange results.

I will add here, that the treaty of alliance between France and England was signed a short time after this event. I did my utmost to prevent it, representing to the Regent that his best policy was to favour the cause of the Pretender, and thus by keeping the attention of Great Britain continually fixed upon her domestic concerns, he would effectually prevent her from influencing the affairs of the continent. Many

and long were the conversations I had with him, insisting upon this point. But although, while he was with me, my arguments might appear to have some weight with him, they were forgotten, clean swept from his mind, directly the Abbé Dubois, who had begun to obtain a most complete and pernicious influence over him, brought his persuasiveness to bear. Dubois' palm had been so well greased by the English that he was afraid of nothing. He succeeded then in inducing the Regent to sign a treaty with England, in every way, it may safely be said, advantageous to that power, and in no way advantageous to France. Amongst other conditions, the Regent agreed to send the so-called Pretender out of the realm, and to force him to seek an asylum in Italy. This was, in fact, executed to the letter. King James, who for some time had retired to Avignon, crossed the Alps and settled in Rome, where he lived ever afterwards. I could not but deplore the adoption of a policy so contrary to the true interests of France; but the business being done I held my peace, and let matters take their course. It was the only course of conduct open to me.

CHAPTER LXXXIV

I HAVE already shown in these memoirs, that the late King had made of the lieutenant of police a species of secret and confidential minister; a sort of inquisitor, with important powers that brought him in constant relation with the King. The Regent, with less authority than the deceased monarch, and with more reasons than he to be well informed of everything passing, intrigues included, found occupying this office of lieutenant of police, Argenson, who had gained his good graces chiefly, I fancy, when the affair of the cordelier was on the carpet, as shown in its place. Argenson, who had much intelligence, and who had desired this post as the entry, the basis, and the road of his fortune, filled it in a very superior manner, and the Regent made use of him with much liberty. The Parliament, very ready to show the extent of its authority everywhere, at the least as though in competition with that of the Regent, suffered impatiently what it called the encroachments of the Court. It wished to indemnify itself for the silence it had been compelled to keep thereon under the last reign, and to re-obtain at the expense of the Regent all it had lost of its authority over the police, of which it is the head. The lieutenant of police is answerable to this body—even receives his orders from it, and its reprimands (in public audiences, standing uncovered at the bar of the Parliament) from the mouth of the Chief-President, or of him who presides, and who calls him neither Master nor Monsieur, but nakedly by his name,

although the lieutenant of police might have claimed these titles, being then Councillor of State.

The Parliament wished, then, to humiliate Argenson (whom it hated during the time of the deceased King); to give a disagreeable lesson to the Regent; to prepare worse treatment still for his lieutenant of police; to make parade of its power, to terrify thus the public, and arrogate to itself the right of limiting the authority of the Regent.

Argenson had often during the late reign, and sometimes since, made use of an intelligent and clever fellow, just suited to him, and named Pomereu, to make discoveries, arrest people, and occasionally keep them a short time in his own house. The Parliament believed, and rightly, that in arresting this man under other pretexts, it would find the thread of many curious and secret tortuosities, which would aid its design, and that it might plume itself upon protecting the public safety against the tyranny of secret arrests and private imprisonments. To carry out its aim it made use of the Chamber of Justice, so as to appear as little as possible in the matter. This Chamber hastened on so well the proceedings, for fear of being stopped on the road, that the first hint people had of them was on learning that Pomereu was, by decree of this Chamber, in the prisons of the Conciergerie, which are those of the Parliament. Argenson, who was informed of this imprisonment immediately it took place, instantly went to the Regent, who that very moment sent a *lettre de cachet,* ordering Pomereu to be taken from prison by force if the gaoler made the slightest difficulty in giving him up to the bearers of the *lettre de cachet;* but that gentleman did not dare to make any. The execution was so prompt that this man was not an hour in prison, and they who had sent him there had not time to seize upon a box of papers which had

been transported with him to the Conciergerie, and which was very carefully carried away with him. At the same time, everything in any way bearing upon Pomereu, or upon the things in which he had been employed, was carefully removed and secreted.

The vexation of the Parliament upon seeing its prey, which it had reckoned upon making such a grand use of, carried off before its eyes, may be imagined. It left nothing undone in order to move the public by its complaints, and by its cries against such an attack upon law. The Chamber of Justice sent a deputation to the Regent, who made fun of it, by gravely giving permission to the deputies to re-take their prisoner, but without saying a single word to them upon his escape from gaol. He was in Paris, in a place where he feared nobody. The Chamber of Justice felt the derisiveness of the Regent's permission, and ceased to transact business. It thought to embarrass the Regent thus, but 'twould have been at its own expense. This lasted only a day or two. The Duc de Noailles spoke to the Chamber; the members felt they could gain nothing by their strike, and that if they were obstinate they would be dispensed with, and others found to perform their duties. They recommenced their labours then, and the Parliament gained nothing by its attack, but only showed its ill-will, and at the same time its powerlessness.

I have forgotten something which, from its singularity, deserves recollection, and I will relate it now lest it should escape me again.

One afternoon, as we were about to take our places at the regency council, the Maréchal de Villars drew me aside and asked me if I knew that Marly was going to be destroyed. I replied, "No;" indeed, I had not heard speak of it; and I added that I could not believe it. "You do not approve of it?" said the Maréchal. I

assured him I was far from doing so. He repeated that the destruction was resolved on, that he knew it beyond all doubt, and that if I wished to hinder it, I had not a moment to lose. I replied that when we took our places I would speak to M. le Duc d'Orléans. "Immediately," quickly replied the Maréchal; "speak to him this instant, for the order is perhaps already given."

As all the council were already seated I went behind to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and whispered in his ear what I had just learnt without naming from whom, and begged him, if my information was right, to suspend execution of his project until I had spoken to him, adding that I would join him at the Palais Royal after the council. He stammered a little, as if sorry at being discovered, but nevertheless agreed to wait for me. I said so in leaving to the Maréchal de Villars, and went to the Palais Royal, where M. le Duc d'Orléans admitted the truth of the news I had heard. I said I would not ask who had given such a pernicious counsel. He tried to show it was good by pointing to the saving in keeping up that would be obtained; to the gain that would accrue from the sale of so many water-conduits and materials; to the unpleasant situation of a place to which the King would not be able to go for several years; and to the expense the King was put to in keeping up so many other beautiful houses, not one of which admitted of pulling down.

I replied to him, that these were the reasons of the guardian of a private gentleman that had been presented to him, the conduct of whom could in no way resemble that of the guardian of a King of France; that the expenses incurred in keeping up Marly were necessary, and that, compared with the total of those of the King, they were but as drops in the ocean. I begged him to get rid of the idea that the sale of the materials would yield any profit,—all the receipts

would go in gifts and pillage, I said; and also that it was not these petty objects he ought to regard, but that he should consider how many millions had been buried in this ancient sewer, to transform it into a fairy palace, unique as to form in all Europe—unique by the beauty of its fountains, unique also by the reputation that the deceased King had given to it; and that it was an object of curiosity to strangers of every rank who came to France; that its destruction would resound throughout Europe with censure; that these mean reasons of petty economy would not prevent all France from being indignant at seeing so distinguished an ornament swept away; that although neither he nor I might be very delicate upon what had been the taste and the favourite work of the late King, the Regent ought to avoid wounding his memory,—which by such a long reign, so many brilliant years, so many grand reverses so heroically sustained, and escaped from in so unhoped-for a manner—had left the entire world in veneration of his person: in fine, that he might reckon all the discontented, all the neutral even, would join in chorus with the Ancient Court, and cry murder; that the Duc du Maine, Madame de Ventadour, the Maréchal de Villeroy would not hesitate to look upon the destruction of Marly as a crime against the King,—a crime they would not fail to make the best of for their own purposes during all the regency, and even after it was at an end. I clearly saw that M. le Duc d'Orléans had not in the least reflected upon all this. He agreed that I was right: promised that Marly should not be touched, that it should continue to be kept up, and thanked me for preserving him from this fault.

When I was well assured of him, "Admit," said I, "that the King, in the other world, would be much astonished if he could know that the Duc de Noailles

had made you order the destruction of Marly, and that it was I who hindered it."

"Oh! as to that," he quickly replied, "it is true he could not believe it." In effect Marly was preserved and kept up; and it is the Cardinal Fleury, with his collegiate proctor's avarice, who has stripped it of its river, which was its most superb charm.

I hastened to relate this good resolve to the Maréchal de Villars. The Duc de Noailles, who, for his own private reasons, had wished the destruction of Marly, was furious when he saw his proposal fail. To indemnify himself in some degree for his vexation, he made the Regent agree, in the utmost secrecy, for fear of another failure, that all the furniture, linen, etc., should be sold. He persuaded M. le Duc d'Orléans that all these things would be spoiled and lost by the time the King was old enough to use them; that in selling them a large sum would be gained to relieve expenses; and that in future years the King could furnish Marly as he pleased. There was an immense quantity of things sold, but owing to favour and pillage they brought very little; and to replace them afterwards, millions were spent. I did not know of this sale, at which anybody bought who wished, and at very low prices, until it had commenced; therefore I was unable to hinder this very damaging parsimoniousness.

The Regent just about this time was bestowing his favours right and left with a very prodigal hand; I thought, therefore, I was fully entitled to ask him for one, which, during the previous reign, had been so rare, so useful, and accordingly so difficult to obtain; I mean the right of entering the King's room—the *grandes entrées*—as it was called, and I attained it at once.

Since the occasion offers, I may as well explain what are the different sorts of *entrées*. The most precious

are called the "grand," which give the right to enter into all the retired places of the King's apartments, whenever the grand chamberlain and the chief gentlemen of the chamber enter. The importance of this privilege under a King who grants audiences with difficulty, need not be insisted on. Enjoying it, you can speak with him, *tête-à-tête,* whenever you please, without asking his permission, and without the knowledge of others; you obtain a familiarity, too, with him by being able to see him thus in private.

The offices which give this right are, those of grand chamberlain, of first gentleman of the chamber, and of grand master of the wardrobe on annual duty; the children, legitimate and illegitimate, of the King, and the wives and husbands of the latter enjoy the same right. As for Monsieur and M. le Duc d'Orléans they always had these *entrées,* and as sons of France, were at liberty to enter and see the King at all hours, but they did not abuse this privilege. The Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse had the same, which they availed themselves of unceasingly, but by the back stairs.

The second *entrées,* simply called *entrées,* were purely personal; no appointment or change gave them. They conferred the right to see the King at his rising, after the *grandes,* and also to see him, but under difficulties, during all the day and evening.

The last *entrées* are those called *chamber entrées.* They also give the right to see the King at his rising, before the distinguished courtiers; but no other privilege except to be present at the *booting* of the King. This was the name employed when the King changed his coat, in going or returning from hunting or a walk. At Marly, all who were staying there by invitation, entered to see this ceremony without asking; elsewhere, those who had not the *entrée* were excluded. The first

gentleman of the chamber had the right, and used it sometimes, to admit four or five persons at the most, to the "booting," if they asked, and provided they were people of quality, or of some distinction.

Lastly, there were the *entrées* of the cabinet which gave you the right to wait for the King there when he entered after rising, until he had given orders for the day, and to pay your court to him, and to enter there when he entered to change his coat. Beyond this, the privilege attached to these admissions did not extend. The Cardinals and the Princes of the blood had the *entrées* of the chamber and those of the cabinet, so had all the chief officials.

I was the first who had the *grandes entrées* from the Regent. D'Antin asked for them next. Soon after, upon this example, they were accorded to D'O. M. le Prince de Conti, the sole prince of the blood who had them not, because he was the sole prince of the blood who did not come from Madame de Montespan, received them next, and little by little the privilege was completely prostituted as so many others were.

By extremely rare good fortune a servant employed in the diamond mines of the Great Mogul found means to secrete about his person a diamond of prodigious size, and what is more marvellous, to gain the seashore and embark without being subjected to the rigid and not very delicate ordeal, that all persons not above suspicion by their name or their occupation, are compelled to submit to, ere leaving the country. He played his cards so well, apparently, that he was not suspected of having been near the mines, or of having had anything to do with the jewel trade. To complete his good fortune he safely arrived in Europe with his diamond. He showed it to several princes, none of whom were rich enough to buy, and carried it at last to England, where the King admired it, but could not

resolve to purchase it. A model of it in crystal was made in England, and the man, the diamond, and the model (perfectly resembling the original) were introduced to Law, who proposed to the Regent that he should purchase the jewel for the King. The price dismayed the Regent, who refused to buy.

Law, who had in many things much grandeur of sentiment, came dispirited to me, bringing the model. I thought, with him, that it was not consistent with the greatness of a King of France to be repelled from the purchase of an inestimable jewel, unique of its kind in the world, by the mere consideration of price, and that the greater the number of potentates who had not dared to think of it, the greater ought to be his care not to let it escape him. Law, ravished to find me think in this manner, begged me to speak to M. le Duc d'Orléans. The state of the finances was an obstacle upon which the Regent much insisted. He feared blame for making so considerable a purchase, while the most pressing necessities could only be provided for with much trouble, and so many people were of necessity kept in distress. I praised this sentiment, but I said that he ought not to regard the greatest King of Europe as he would a private gentleman, who would be very reprehensible if he threw away 100,000 livres upon a fine diamond, while he owed many debts which he could not pay: that he must consider the honour of the crown, and not lose the occasion of obtaining a priceless diamond which would efface the lustre of all others in Europe: that it was a glory for his regency which would last for ever; that whatever might be the state of the finances the saving obtained by a refusal of the jewel would not much relieve them, for it would be scarcely perceptible; in fact I did not quit M. le Duc d'Orléans until he had promised that the diamond should be bought.

Law, before speaking to me, had so strongly represented to the dealer the impossibility of selling his diamond at the price he hoped for, and the loss he would suffer in cutting it into different pieces, that at last he made him reduce the price to two millions, with the scrapings, which must necessarily be made in polishing, given in. The bargain was concluded on these terms. The interest upon the two millions was paid to the dealer until the principal could be given to him, and in the meanwhile two millions' worth of jewels were handed to him as security.

M. le Duc d'Orléans was agreeably deceived by the applause that the public gave to an acquisition so beautiful and so unique. This diamond was called the "Regent." It is of the size of a greengage plum, nearly round, of a thickness which corresponds with its volume, perfectly white, free from all spot, speck, or blemish, of admirable water, and weighs more than 500 grains. I much applauded myself for having induced the Regent to make so illustrious a purchase.

CHAPTER LXXXV

IN 1716 the Duchesse de Lesdiguières died at Paris in her fine hotel. She was not old, but had been long a widow, and had lost her only son. She was the last relic of the Gondi who were brought into France by Catherine de' Medici, and who made so prodigious a fortune. She left great wealth. She was a sort of fairy, who, though endowed with much wit, would see scarcely anybody, still less give dinners to the few people she did see. She never went to Court, and seldom went out of her house. The door of her house was always thrown back, disclosing a grating, through which could be perceived a true fairy palace, such as is sometimes described in romances. Inside it was nearly desert, but of consummate magnificence, and all this confirmed the first impression, assisted by the singularity of everything, her followers, her livery, the yellow hangings of her carriage, and the two great Moors who always followed her. She left much to her servants, and for pious purposes, but nothing to her daughter-in-law, though poor and respectful to her. Others got magnificent legacies.

Cavoye died about the same time. I have said enough about him and his wife to have nothing to add. Cavoye, away from Court, was like a fish out of water; and he could not stand it long. If romances have rarely produced conduct like that of his wife towards him, they would with still greater difficulty describe the courage with which her lasting love for her husband sustained her in her attendance on his last illness, and the entombment to which she condemned herself after-

wards. She preserved her first mourning all her life, never slept away from the house where he died, or went out, except to go twice a day to Saint-Sulpice to pray in the chapel where he was buried. She would never see any other persons besides those she had seen during the last moments of her husband, and occupied herself with good works also, consuming herself thus in a few years without a single sign of hesitation. A vehemence so equal and so maintained is perhaps an example, great, unique, and assuredly very respectable.

Peter I., Czar of Muscovy, has made for himself, and justly, such a great name, in his own country, in all Europe, and in Asia, that I will not undertake to describe so grand, so illustrious a prince—comparable to the greatest men of antiquity—who has been the admiration of his age, who will be that of years to come, and whom all Europe has been so much occupied in studying. The singularity of the journey into France of so extraordinary a prince, has appeared to me to deserve a complete description in an unbroken narrative. It is for this reason that I place my account of it here a little late, according to the order of time, but with dates that will rectify this fault.

Various things relating to this monarch have been seen in their place; his various journeys to Holland, Germany, Vienna, England, and to several parts of the North; the object of those journeys, with some account of his military actions, his policy, his family. It has been shown that he wished to come into France during the time of the late King, who civilly refused to receive him. There being no longer this obstacle, he wished to satisfy his curiosity, and he informed the Regent through Prince Kourakin, his ambassador at Paris, that he was going to quit the Low Countries, and come and see the King.

There was nothing for it but to appear very pleased,

although the Regent would gladly have dispensed with this visit. The expenses to be defrayed were great; the trouble would be not less great with a prince so powerful and so clear-sighted, but full of whims, with a remnant of barbarous manners, and a grand suite of people, of behaviour very different from that common in these countries, full of caprices and of strange fashions, and both they and their master very touchy and very positive upon what they claimed to be due or permitted to them.

Moreover the Czar was at daggers drawn with the King of England, the enmity between them passing all decent limits, and being the more bitter because personal. This troubled not a little the Regent, whose intimacy with the King of England was public, the private interest of Dubois carrying it even to dependence. The dominant passion of the Czar was to render his territories flourishing by commerce; he had made a number of canals in order to facilitate it; there was one for which he needed the concurrence of the King of England, because it traversed a little corner of his German dominions. From jealousy George would not consent to it. Peter, engaged in the war with Poland, then in that of the North, in which George was also engaged, negotiated in vain. He was all the more irritated, because he was in no condition to employ force; and this canal, much advanced, could not be continued. Such was the source of that hatred which lasted all the lives of these monarchs, and with the utmost bitterness.

Kourakin was of a branch of that ancient family of the Jagellons, which had long worn the crowns of Poland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. He was a tall, well-made man, who felt all the grandeur of his origin; had much intelligence, knowledge of the way of managing men, and instruction. He spoke French and several languages very fairly; he had travelled much,

served in war, then been employed in different courts. He was Russian to the backbone, and his extreme avarice much damaged his talents. The Czar and he had married two sisters, and each had a son. The Czarina had been repudiated and put into a convent near Moscow; Kourakin in no way suffered from this disgrace; he perfectly knew his master, with whom he kept on very free terms, and by whom he was treated with confidence and consideration. His last mission had been to Rome, where he remained three years; thence he came as ambassador to Paris. At Rome he was without official character, and without business except a secret one, with which the Czar had entrusted him, as to a sure and enlightened man.

This monarch, who wished to raise himself and his country from barbarism, and extend his power by conquests and treaties, had felt the necessity of marriages, in order to ally himself with the chief potentates of Europe. But to form such marriages he must be of the Catholic religion, from which the Greeks were separated by such a little distance, that he thought his project would easily be received in his dominions, if he allowed liberty of conscience there. But this prince was sufficiently sagacious to seek enlightenment beforehand upon Romish pretensions. He had sent for that purpose to Rome a man of no mark, but capable of well fulfilling his mission, who remained there five or six months, and who brought back no very satisfactory report. Later he opened his heart in Holland to King William, who dissuaded him from his design, and who counselled him even to imitate England, and to make himself the chief of his religion, without which he would never be really master in his own country. This counsel pleased the Czar all the more, because it was by the wealth and by the authority of the patriarchs of Moscow, his grandfathers, and great-

grandfathers, that his father had attained the crown, although only of ordinary rank among the Russian nobility.

These patriarchs were dependent upon those of the Greek rite of Constantinople but very slightly. They had obtained such great power, and such prodigious rank, that at their entry into Moscow the Czar held their stirrups, and, on foot, led their horse by the bridle. Since the grandfather of Peter, there had been no patriarch at Moscow. Peter I., who had reigned some time with his elder brother, incapable of affairs, long since dead, leaving no son, had, like his father, never consented to have a patriarch there. The archbishops of Novgorod supplied their place in certain things, as occupying the chief see after that of Moscow, but with scarcely any authority that the Czar did not entirely usurp, and more carefully still after King William had given him the counsel before alluded to; so that by degrees he had become the real religious chief of his vast dominions.

Nevertheless, the passionate desire he had to give to his posterity the privilege of marrying with Catholic princes, the wish he had, above all, for the honour of alliances with the house of France, and that of Austria, made him return to his first project. He tried to persuade himself that the man whom he had secretly sent to Rome had not been well informed, or had ill understood; he resolved, therefore, to fathom his doubts, so that he should no longer have any as to the course he ought to adopt.

It was with this design that he chose Prince Kourakin, whose knowledge and intelligence were known to him, and sent him to Rome under pretence of curiosity, feeling that a nobleman of his rank would find the best, the most important, and the most distinguished society there ready to receive him; and that by remaining

there, under pretext of liking the life he led, and of wishing to see and admire at his ease all the marvels of so many different kinds collected there, he should have leisure and means to return perfectly instructed upon everything he wished to know. Kourakin, in fact, remained in Rome three years, associating with the *savans* on the one hand and the best company on the other, whence by degrees he obtained all he wished to know; all the more readily because this Court boasts of its temporal pretensions and of its conquests of this kind, instead of keeping them secret. In consequence of the long and faithful report that Kourakin made to the Czar, that prince heaved a sigh, saying that he must be master in his own country, and could not place there anybody greater than himself; and never afterwards did he think of turning Catholic.

This fact respecting the Czars and Rome, Prince Kourakin did not hide. Everybody who knew him has heard him relate it. I have eaten with him and he with me, and I have talked a good deal with him, and heard him talk, with pleasure, upon many things.

The Regent, informed by him of the forthcoming arrival in France of the Czar by sea, sent the King's equipages, horses, coaches, vehicles, waggons, and tables and chambers with Du Libois, one of the King's gentlemen in ordinary, to go and wait for the Czar at Dunkerque, pay the expenses incurred by him and his suite on the way to Paris, and everywhere render him the same honour as to the King. The Czar proposed to allot a hundred days to his journey. The apartment of the Queen-mother at the Louvre was furnished for him, the councils usually held there taking place in the houses of the chiefs of these councils.

M. le Duc d'Orléans discussing with me as to the nobleman best fitted to be appointed to wait upon the Czar during his stay, I recommended the Maréchal de

Tessé, as a man without occupation, who well knew the language and usages of society, who was accustomed to foreigners by his journeys and negotiations in Spain, Turin, Rome, and in other courts of Italy, and who, gentle and polite, was sure to perform his duties well. M. le Duc d'Orléans agreed with me, and the next day sent for him and gave him his orders.

When it was known that the Czar was near Dunkerque, the Regent sent the Marquis de Neelle to receive him at Calais, and accompany him until they met the Maréchal de Tessé, who was not to go beyond Beaumont to wait for him. At the same time the Hôtel de Lesdiguières was prepared for the Czar and his suite, under the idea that he might prefer a private house, with all his people around him, to the Louvre. The Hôtel de Lesdiguières was large and handsome, as I have said at the commencement of this chapter, adjoined the arsenal, and belonged by succession to the Maréchal de Villeroy, who lodged at the Tuileries. Thus the house was empty, because the Duc de Villeroy, who was not a man fond of display, had found it too distant to live in. It was entirely refurnished, and very magnificently, with the furniture of the King.

The Czar arrived at Beaumont on Friday, the 7th of May, 1717, about mid-day. Tessé made his reverences to him as he descended from his coach, had the honour of dining with him, and of escorting him that very day to Paris.

The Czar entered the city in one of Tessé's coaches, with three of his suite with him, but not Tessé himself. The Maréchal followed in another coach. The Czar alighted at nine o'clock in the evening at the Louvre, and walked all through the apartments of the Queen-mother. He considered them to be too magnificently hung and lighted, jumped into his coach again, and went to the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, where he wished

to lodge. He thought the apartment destined for him too fine also, and had his camp-bed immediately spread out in a wardrobe. The Maréchal de Tessé, who was to do the honours of his house and of his table, to accompany him everywhere, and not quit the place where he might be, lodged in an apartment of the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, and had enough to do in following and sometimes running after him. Verton, one of the King's *maîtres d'hôtel,* was charged with serving him and all the tables of the Czar and his suite. The suite consisted of forty persons of all sorts, twelve or fifteen of whom were considerable people in themselves, or by their appointments; they all ate with the Czar.

Verton was a clever lad, strong in certain company, fond of good cheer and of gaming, and served the Czar with so much order, and conducted himself so well, that this monarch and all the suite conceived a singular friendship for him.

The Czar excited admiration by his extreme curiosity, always bearing upon his views of government, trade, instruction, police, and this curiosity embraced everything, disdained nothing in the smallest degree useful; it was marked and enlightened, esteeming only what merited to be esteemed, and exhibited in a clear light the intelligence, justness, ready appreciation of his mind. Everything showed in the Czar the vast extent of his knowledge, and a sort of logical harmony of ideas. He allied in the most surprising manner the highest, the proudest, the most delicate, the most sustained, and at the same time the least embarrassing majesty, when he had established it in all its safety with a marked politeness. Yet he was always and with everybody the master everywhere, but with gradations, according to the persons he was with. He had a kind of familiarity which sprang from liberty, but he was

not without a strong dash of that ancient barbarism of his country, which rendered all his actions rapid, nay, precipitous, his will uncertain, and not to be constrained or contradicted in anything. Often his table was but little decent, much less so were the attendants who served, often too with an openness of kingly audacity everywhere. What he proposed to see or do was entirely independent of means; they were to be bent to his pleasure and command. His desire for liberty, his dislike to be made a show of, his free and easy habits, often made him prefer hired coaches, common cabs even; nay, the first which he could lay his hands on, though belonging to people below him of whom he knew nothing. He jumped in, and had himself driven all over the city, and outside it. On one occasion he seized hold of the coach of Madame de Mattignon, who had come to gape at him, drove off with it to Boulogne and other country places near Paris. The owner was much astonished to find she must journey back on foot. On such occasions the Maréchal de Tessé and his suite had often hard work to find the Czar, who had thus escaped them.

"To the Health of the King!"
Jacobites drinking to the health of the newly born Pretender.
—p. 1220

From the painting by F. Willems.

CHAPTER LXXXVI

THE Czar was a very tall man, exceedingly well made; rather thin, his face somewhat round, a high forehead, good eyebrows, a rather short nose, but not too short, and large at the end, rather thick lips, complexion reddish brown, good black eyes, large, bright, piercing, and well open; his look majestic and gracious when he liked, but when otherwise, severe and stern, with a twitching of the face, not often occurring, but which appeared to contort his eyes and all his physiognomy, and was frightful to see; it lasted a moment, gave him a wild and terrible air, and passed away. All his bearing showed his intellect, his reflectiveness, and his greatness, and was not devoid of a certain grace. He wore a linen collar, a round brown wig, as though without powder, and which did not reach to his shoulders; a brown coat tight to the body, even, and with gold buttons; vest, breeches, stockings, no gloves or ruffles, the star of his order over his coat, and the cordon under it, the coat itself being frequently quite unbuttoned, his hat upon the table, but never upon his head, even out of doors. With this simplicity ill-accompanied or ill-mounted as he might be, the air of greatness natural to him could not be mistaken.

What he ate and drank at his two regular meals is inconceivable, without reckoning the beer, lemonade, and other drinks he swallowed between these repasts, his suite following his example; a bottle or two of beer, as many more of wine, and occasionally, liqueurs

afterwards; at the end of the meal strong drinks, such as brandy, as much sometimes as a quart. This was about the usual quantity at each meal. His suite at his table drank more and ate in proportion, at eleven o'clock in the morning and at eight at night. There was a chaplain who ate at the table of the Czar, who consumed half as much again as the rest, and with whom the monarch, who was fond of him, much amused himself. Prince Kourakin went every day to the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, but lodged elsewhere.

The Czar well understood French, and I think could have spoken it, if he had wished, but for greatness' sake he always had an interpreter. Latin and many other languages he spoke very well. There was a detachment of guards in his house, but he would scarcely ever allow himself to be followed by them. He would not set foot outside the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, whatever curiosity he might feel, or give any signs of life, until he had received a visit from the King.

On Saturday, the day after his arrival, the Regent went in the morning to see the Czar. This monarch left his cabinet, advanced a few paces, embraced Monsieur d'Orléans with an air of great superiority, pointed to the door of the cabinet, and instantly turning on his heel, without the slightest compliment, entered there. The Regent followed, and Prince Kourakin after him to serve as interpreter. They found two armchairs facing each other, the Czar seated himself in the upper, the Regent in the other. The conversation lasted nearly an hour without public affairs being mentioned, after which the Czar left his cabinet; the Regent followed him, made him a profound reverence, but slightly returned, and left him in the same place as he had found him on entering.

On Monday, the 10th of May, the King went to see the Czar, who received him at the door, saw him alight

from his coach, walked with him at his left into his chamber, where they found two armchairs equally placed. The King sat down in the right-hand one, the Czar in the other, Prince Kourakin served as interpreter. It was astonishing to see the Czar take the King under both arms, hoist him up to his level, embrace him thus in the air; and the King, young as he was, show no fear, although he could not possibly have been prepared for such a reception. It was striking, too, to see the grace which the Czar displayed before the King, the air of tenderness he assumed towards him, the politeness which flowed as it were naturally, and which nevertheless was mixed with greatness, with equality of rank, and slightly with superiority of age: for all these things made themselves felt. He praised the King, appeared charmed with him, and persuaded everybody he was. He embraced him again and again. The King paid his brief compliment very prettily; and M. du Maine, the Maréchal de Villeroy, and the distinguished people present, filled up the conversation. The meeting lasted a short quarter of an hour. The Czar accompanied the King as he had received him, and saw him to his coach.

On Tuesday, the 11th of May, between four and five o'clock, the Czar went to see the King. He was received by the King at his carriage door, took up a position on his right, and was conducted within. All these ceremonies had been agreed on before the King went to see him. The Czar showed the same affection and the same attentions to the King as before; and his visit was not longer than the one he had received, but the crowd much surprised him.

He had been at eight o'clock in the morning to see the Place Royal, the Place des Victoires, and the Place de Vendôme, and the next day he went to the Observa-

toire, the Gobelins, and the King's Garden of Simples. Everywhere he amused himself in examining everything, and in asking many questions.

On Thursday, the 13th of May, he took medicine, but did not refrain after dinner from calling upon several celebrated artificers. On Friday, the 14th, he went at six o'clock in the morning into the grand gallery of the Louvre, to see the plans in relief of all the King's fortified places, Hasfield, with his engineers, doing the honours. The Czar examined all these plans for a long time; visited many other parts of the Louvre, and descended afterwards into the Tuileries garden, from which everybody had been excluded. They were working then upon the Pont Tournant. The Czar industriously examined this work, and remained there a long time. In the afternoon he went to see, at the Palais Royal, Madame, who had sent her compliments to him by her officer. The armchair excepted, she received him as she would have received the King. M. le Duc d'Orléans came afterwards and took him to the Opera, into his grand box, where they sat upon the front seat upon a splendid carpet. Sometime after, the Czar asked if there was no beer to be had. Immediately a large goblet of it was brought to him, on a salver. The Regent rose, took it, and presented it to the Czar, who with a smile and an inclination of politeness, received the goblet without any ceremony, drank, and put it back on the salver which the Regent still held. In handing it back, the Regent took a plate, in which was a napkin, presented it to the Czar, who without rising made use of it, at which the house appeared rather astonished. At the fourth act the Czar went away to supper, but did not wish the Regent to leave the box. The next morning he jumped into a hired coach, and went to see a number of curiosities among the workmen.

On the 16th of May, Whit Sunday, he went to the Invalides, where he wished to see and examine everything. At the refectory he tasted the soldiers' soup and their wine, drank to their healths, struck them on the shoulders, and called them comrades. He much admired the church, the dispensary, and the infirmary, and appeared much pleased with the order of the establishment. The Maréchal de Villars did the honours; the Maréchale went there to look on. The Czar was very civil to her.

On Monday, the 17th, he dined early with Prince Ragotzi, who had invited him, and afterwards went to Meudon, where he found some of the King's horses to enable him to see the gardens and the park at his ease. Prince Ragotzi accompanied him.

On Tuesday, the 18th, the Maréchal d'Estrées took him, at eight o'clock in the morning, to his house at Issy, gave him a dinner, and much amused him during the day with many things shown to him relating to the navy.

On Monday, the 24th, he went out early to the Tuileries, before the King was up. He entered the rooms of the Maréchal de Villeroy, who showed him the crown jewels. They were more beautiful and more numerous than he suspected, but he said he was not much of a judge of such things. He stated that he cared but little for the beauties purely of wealth and imagination, above all for those he could not attain. Thence he wished to go and see the King, who spared him the trouble by coming. It had been expressly arranged thus, so that his visit should appear one of chance. They met each other in a cabinet, and remained there. The King, who held a roll of paper in his hand, gave it to him, and said it was the map of his territories. This compliment much pleased the Czar, whose politeness and friendly affectionate bear-

ing were the same as before, with much grace and majesty.

In the afternoon he went to Versailles, where the Maréchal de Tessé left him to the Duc d'Antin. The apartment of Madame la Dauphine was prepared for him, and he slept in the room of Monseigneur le Dauphin (the King's father), now made into a cabinet for the Queen.

On Tuesday, the 25th, he had traversed the gardens, and had been upon the canal early in the morning, before the hour of his appointment with D'Antin. He saw all Versailles, Trianon, and the menagerie. His principal suite was lodged at the château. They took ladies with them, and slept in the apartments Madame de Maintenon had occupied, quite close to that in which the Czar slept. Bloin, governor of Versailles, was extremely scandalised to see this temple of prudery thus profaned. Its goddess and he formerly would have been less shocked. The Czar and his people were not accustomed to restraint.

The expenses of this Prince amounted to six hundred crowns a day, though he had much diminished his table since the commencement.

On Sunday, the 30th of May, he set out with Bellegarde, and many relays, to dine at Petit Bourg, with D'Antin, who received him there, and took him in the afternoon to see Fontainebleau, where he slept, and the morrow there was a stag-hunt, at which the Comte de Toulouse did the honours. Fontainebleau did not much please the Czar, and the hunt did not please him at all; for he nearly fell off his horse, not being accustomed to this exercise, and finding it too violent. When he returned to Petit Bourg, the appearance of his carriage showed that he had eaten and drunk a good deal in it.

On Friday, the 11th of June, he went from Ver-

sailles to Saint-Cyr, where he saw all the household, and the girls in their classes. He was received there like the King. He wished to see Madame de Maintenon, who, expecting his curiosity, had buried herself in her bed, all the curtains closed, except one, which was half-open. The Czar entered her chamber, pulled back the window-curtains upon arriving, then the bed-curtains, took a good long stare at her, said not a word to her,—nor did she open her lips,—and, without making her any kind of reverence, went his way. I knew afterwards that she was much astonished, and still more mortified at this; but the King was no more. The Czar returned on Saturday, the 12th of June, to Paris.

On Tuesday, the 15th of June, he went early to D'Antin's Paris house. Working this day with M. le Duc d'Orléans, I finished in half an hour; he was surprised, and wished to detain me. I said, I could always have the honour of finding him, but not the Czar, who was going away; that I had not yet seen him, and was going to D'Antin's to stare at my ease. Nobody entered except those invited, and some ladies with Madame la Duchesse and the Princesses, her daughters, who wished to stare also. I entered the garden, where the Czar was walking. The Maréchal de Tessé, seeing me at a distance, came up, wishing to present me to the Czar. I begged him to do nothing of the kind, not even to perceive me, but to let me gape at my ease, which I could not do if made known. I begged him also to tell this to D'Antin, and with these precautions I was enabled to satisfy my curiosity without interruption. I found that the Czar conversed tolerably freely, but always as the master everywhere. He retired into a cabinet, where D'Antin showed him various plans and several curiosities, upon which he asked several questions. It was there I saw the convulsion which I have noticed. I asked Tessé if it often

happened; he replied, "several times a day, especially when he is not on his guard to prevent it." Returning afterwards into the garden, D'Antin made the Czar pass through the lower apartments, and informed him that Madame la Duchesse was there with some ladies, who had a great desire to see him. He made no reply, but allowed himself to be conducted. He walked more gently, turned his head towards the apartment where all the ladies were under arms to receive him; looked well at them all, made a slight inclination of the head to the whole company at once, and passed on haughtily. I think, by the manner in which he received other ladies, that he would have shown more politeness to these if Madame la Duchesse had not been there, making her visit too pretentious. He affected even not to inquire which she was, or to ask the name of any of the others. I was nearly an hour without quitting him, and unceasingly regarding him. At last I saw he remarked it. This rendered me more discreet, lest he should ask who I was. As he was returning, I walked away to the room where the table was laid. D'Antin, always the same, had found means to have a very good portrait of the Czarina placed upon the chimney-piece of this room, with verses in her praise, which much pleased and surprised the Czar. He and his suite thought the portrait very like.

The King gave the Czar two magnificent pieces of Gobelins tapestry. He wished to give him also a beautiful sword, ornamented with diamonds, but he excused himself from accepting it. The Czar, on his side, distributed 60,000 livres to the King's domestics, who had waited upon him; gave to D'Antin, Maréchal d'Estrées, and Maréchal Tessé, his portrait, adorned with diamonds, and five gold and eleven silver medals, representing the principal actions of his life. He made a friendly present to Verton, whom he begged the Re-

gent to send to him as *chargé d'affaires* of the King, which the Regent promised.

On Wednesday, the 16th of June, he attended on horseback a review of the two regiments of the guards, gendarmes, light horse, and mousquetaires. There was only M. le Duc d'Orléans with him; the Czar scarcely looked at these troops, and they perceived it. He partook of a dinner-supper at Saint Ouen, at the Duc de Tresmes', where he said that the excessive heat and dust, together with the crowd on horseback and on foot, had made him quit the review sooner than he wished. The meal was magnificent; the Czar learnt that the Marquise de Bethune, who was looking on, was the daughter of the Duc de Tresmes; he begged her to sit at table; she was the only lady who did so, among a crowd of noblemen. Several other ladies came to look on, and to these he was very civil when he knew who they were.

On Thursday, the 17th, he went for the second time to the Observatoire, and there supped with the Maréchal de Villars.

On Friday, the 18th of June, the Regent went early to the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, to say adieu to the Czar, remaining some time with him, with Prince Kourakin present. After this visit the Czar went to say good-bye to the King at the Tuileries. It had been agreed that there should be no more ceremonies between them. It was impossible to display more intelligence, grace, and tenderness towards the King than the Czar displayed on all these occasions; and again on the morrow, when the King came to the Hôtel de Lesdiguières to wish him a pleasant journey, no ceremony being observed.

On Sunday, the 20th of June, the Czar departed, and slept at Ivry, bound straight for Spa, where he was expected by the Czarina. He would be accompanied by

nobody, not even on leaving Paris. The luxury he remarked much surprised him; he was moved in speaking upon the King and upon France, saying, he saw with sorrow that this luxury would soon ruin the country. He departed, charmed by the manner in which he had been received, by all he had seen, by the liberty that had been left to him, and extremely desirous to closely unite himself with the King; but the interests of the Abbé Dubois, and of England, were obstacles which have been much deplored since.

The Czar had an extreme desire to unite himself to France. Nothing would have been more advantageous to our commerce, to our importance in the north, in Germany, in all Europe. The Czar kept England in restraint as to her commerce, and King George in fear for his German states. He kept Holland respectful, and the Emperor measured. It cannot be denied that he made a grand figure in Europe and in Asia, or that France would have infinitely profited by close union with him. He did not like the Emperor; he wished to sever us from England, and it was England which rendered us deaf to his invitations, unbecomingly so, though they lasted after his departure. Often I vainly pressed the Regent upon this subject, and gave him reasons of which he felt all the force, and to which he could not reply. He was bewitched by Dubois, who panted to become Cardinal, and who built all his hopes of success upon England. The English saw his ambition, and took advantage of it for their own interests. Dubois' aim was to make use of the intimacy between the King of England and the Emperor, in order that the latter might be induced by the former to obtain a Cardinalship from the Pope, over whom he had great power. It will be seen, in due time, what success has attended the intrigues of the scheming and unscrupulous Abbé.

CHAPTER LXXXVII

COURSON, Intendant, or rather King of Languedoc, exercised his authority there so tyrannically that the people suffered the most cruel oppressions at his hands. He had been Intendant of Rouen, and was so hated that more than once he thought himself in danger of having his brains beaten out with stones. He became at last so odious that he was removed; but the credit of his father saved him, and he was sent as Intendant to Bordeaux. He was internally and externally a very animal, extremely brutal, extremely insolent, his hands by no means clean, as was also the case with those of his secretaries, who did all his work for him, he being very idle and quite unfit for his post.

Amongst other tyrannic acts he levied very violent and heavy taxes in Perigueux, of his own good will and pleasure, without any edict or decree of the Council; and seeing that people were not eager to satisfy his demands, augmented them, multiplied the expenses, and at last threw into dungeons some sheriffs and other rich citizens. He became so tyrannical that they sent a deputation to Paris to complain of him. But the deputies went in vain the round of all the members of the council of the regency, after having for two months kicked their heels in the ante-chamber of the Duc de Noailles, the minister who ought to have attended to their representations.

The Comte de Toulouse, who was a very just man, and who had listened to them, was annoyed that they could obtain no hearing of the Duc de Noailles, and

spoke to me on the subject. I was as indignant as he. I spoke to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who only knew the matter superficially. I showed him the necessity of thoroughly examining into complaints of this nature; the injustice of allowing these deputies to wear out hope, patience, and life, in the streets of Paris, without giving some audience; the cruelty of suffering honest citizens to languish in dungeons, without knowing why or by what authority they were there. He agreed with me, and promised to speak to the Duc de Noailles. At the first finance council after this, I apprised the Comte de Toulouse, and we both asked the Duc de Noailles when he meant to bring forward the affair of these Perigueux people.

He was utterly unprepared for this question, and wished to put us off. I said to him that for a long time some of these people had been in prison, and others had wandered the streets of Paris; that this was shameful, and could not be longer endured. The Comte de Toulouse spoke very firmly, in the same sense. M. le Duc d'Orléans arrived and took his place.

As the Duc de Noailles opened his bag, I said very loudly to M. le Duc d'Orléans that M. le Comte de Toulouse and I had just asked M. de Noailles when he would bring forward the Perigueux affair; that these people, innocent or guilty, begged only to be heard and tried; and that it appeared to me the council was in honour bound to keep them in misery no longer. On finishing, I looked at the Comte de Toulouse, who also said something short but rather strong. M. le Duc d'Orléans replied that we could not have done better. The Duc de Noailles began muttering something about the press of business; that he had not time, and so forth. I interrupted him by saying that he must find time, and that he ought to have found it long before; that nothing was so important as to keep people from

ruin, or to extricate others from dungeons they were remaining in without knowing why. M. le Duc d'Orléans said a word to the same effect, and ordered the Duc de Noailles to get himself ready to bring forward the case in a week.

From excuse to excuse, three weeks passed over. At last I said openly to M. le Duc d'Orléans that he was being laughed at, and that justice was being trodden under foot. At the next council it appeared that M. le Duc d'Orléans had already told the Duc de Noailles he would wait no longer. M. le Comte de Toulouse and I continued to ask him if at last he would bring forward the Perigueux affair. We doubted not that it would in the end be brought forward, but artifice was not yet at an end.

It was on a Tuesday afternoon, when M. le Duc d'Orléans often abridged the council to go to the opera. Knowing this, the Duc de Noailles kept all the council occupied with different matters. I was between him and the Comte de Toulouse. At the end of each matter I said to him, "And the Perigueux affair?" "Directly," he replied, and at once commenced something else. At last I perceived his project, and whispered so to the Comte de Toulouse, who had already suspected it, and resolved not to be its dupe. When the Duc de Noailles had exhausted his bag, it was five o'clock. After putting back his papers he closed his bag, and said to M. le Duc d'Orléans that there was still the Perigueux affair which he had ordered him to bring forward, but that it would be long and detailed; that he doubtless wished to go to the opera; that it could be attended to next week; and at once, without waiting for a reply, he rises, pushes back his stool, and turns to go away. I took him by the arm.

"Gently," said I. "You must learn his highness's pleasure. Monsieur," said I to M. le Duc d'Orléans,

still firmly holding the sleeve of the Duc de Noailles, "do you care much to-day for the opera?"

"No, no," replied he; "let us turn to the Perigueux affair."

"But without strangling it," replied I.

"Yes," said M. le Duc d'Orléans: then looking at M. le Duc, who smiled; "you don't care to go there?"

"No, Monsieur, let us see this business," replied M. le Duc.

"Oh, sit down again then, Monsieur," said I to the Duc de Noailles in a very firm tone, pulling him sharply; "take your rest, and re-open your bag."

Without saying a word he drew forward his stool with a great noise, and threw himself upon it as though he would smash it. Rage beamed from his eyes. The Comte de Toulouse smiled; he had said his word, too, upon the opera, and all the company looked at us; nearly every one smiling, but astounded also.

The Duc de Noailles displayed his papers, and began reading them. As various documents were referred to, I turned them over, and now and then took him up and corrected him. He did not dare to show anger in his replies, yet he was foaming. He passed an eulogy upon Basville (father of the Intendant), talked of the consideration he merited; excused Courson, and babbled thereupon as much as he could to extenuate everything, and lose sight of the principal points at issue. Seeing that he did not finish, and that he wished to tire us, and to manage the affair in his own way, I interrupted him, saying that the father and the son were two people; that the case in point respected the son alone, and that he had to determine whether an Intendant was authorised or not, by his office, to tax people at will; to raise imposts in the towns and country places of his department, without edicts ordering

them, without even a decree of council, solely by his own particular ordonnances, and to keep people in prison four or five months, without form or shadow of trial, because they refused to pay these heavy taxes, rendered still more heavy by expenses. Then, turning around so as to look hard at him, "It is upon that, Monsieur," added I, "that we must decide, since your report is over, and not amuse ourselves with a panegyric upon M. de Basville, who is not mixed up in the case."

The Duc de Noailles, all the more beside himself because he saw the Regent smile, and M. le Duc, who looked at me do the same, but more openly, began to speak, or rather to stammer. He did not dare, however, to decide against the release of the prisoners.

"And the expenses, and the ordonnance respecting these taxes, what do you do with them?"

"By setting the prisoners at liberty," he said, "the ordonnance falls to the ground."

I did not wish to push things further just then. The liberation of the prisoners, and the quashing of the ordonnance, were determined on: some voices were for the reimbursement of the charges at the expense of the Intendant, and for preventing him to do the like again.

When it was my turn to speak, I expressed the same opinions, but I added that it was not enough to recompense people so unjustly ill-treated; that I thought a sum of money, such as it should please the council to name, ought to be adjudged to them; and that as to an Intendant who abused the authority of his office so much as to usurp that of the King and impose taxes, such as pleased him by his own ordonnances, and who threw people into dungeons as he thought fit by his private authority, pillaging thus a province, I was of opinion that his Royal Highness should be asked to

make such an example of him that all the other Intendants might profit by it.

The majority of those who had spoken before me made signs that I was right, but did not speak again. Others were against me. M. le Duc d'Orléans promised the liberation of the prisoners, broke Courson's ordonnance, and all which had followed it; said that as for the rest, he would take care these people should be well recompensed, and Courson well blamed; that he merited worse, and, but for his father, would have received it. As we were about to rise, I said it would be as well to draw up the decree at once, and M. le Duc d'Orléans approved. Noailles pounced, like a bird of prey, upon paper and ink, and commenced writing. I bent down and read as he wrote. He stopped and boggled at the annulling of the ordonnance, and the prohibition against issuing one again without authorisation by edict or decree of council. I dictated the clause to him; he looked at the company as though questioning all eyes.

"Yes," said I, "it was passed like that—you have only to ask again." M. le Duc d'Orléans said, "Yes." Noailles wrote. I took the paper, and read what he had written. He received it back in fury, cast it among the papers pell-mell into his bag, then shoved his stool almost to the other end of the room, and went out, bristling like a wild boar, without looking at or saluting anybody—we all laughing. M. le Duc and several others came to me, and with M. le Comte de Toulouse, were much diverted. M. de Noailles had, in fact, so little command over himself, that, in turning to go out, he struck the table, swearing, and saying he could endure it no longer.

I learnt afterwards, by frequenters of the Hôtel de Noailles, who told it to my friends, that when he reached home, he went to bed, and would not see a

soul; that fever seized him, that the next day he was of a frightful temper, and that he had been heard to say he could no longer endure the annoyances I caused him. It may be imagined whether or not this softened me. The Duc de Noailles had, in fact, behaved towards me with such infamous treachery, and such unmasked impudence, that I took pleasure at all times and at all places in making him feel, and others see, the sovereign disdain I entertained for him. I did not allow my private feelings to sway my judgment when public interests were at stake, for when I thought the Duc de Noailles right, and this often occurred, I supported him; but when I knew him to be wrong, or when I caught him neglecting his duties, conniving at injustice, shirking inquiry, or evading the truth, I in no way spared him. The incident just related is an illustration of the treatment he often received at my hands. Fret, fume, stamp, storm, as he might, I cared nothing for him. His anger to me was as indifferent as his friendship. I despised both equally. Occasionally he would imagine, after there had been no storm between us for some time, that I had become reconciled to him, and would make advances to me. But the stern and terrible manner in which I met them,—or rather refused to meet them, taking no more notice of his politeness and his compliments, than as if they made no appeal whatever to my eyes or ears,—soon convinced him of the permanent nature of our quarrel, and drove him to the most violent rage and despair.

The history of the affair was, apparently, revealed by somebody to the deputies of Perigueux (for this very evening it was talked of in Paris), who came and offered me many thanks. Noailles was so afraid of me, that he did not keep their business unsettled more than two days.

A few months afterwards Courson was recalled,

amid the bonfires of his province. This did not improve him, or hinder him from obtaining afterwards one of the two places of councillor at the Royal Council of Finance, for he was already Councillor of State at the time of this affair of Perigueux.

An amusement, suited to the King's age, caused a serious quarrel. A sort of tent had been erected for him on the terrace of the Tuileries, before his apartments, and on the same level. The diversions of kings always have to do with distinction. He invented some medals to give to the courtiers of his own age, whom he wished to distinguish, and those medals, which were intended to be worn, conferred the right of entering this tent without being invited; thus was created the Order of the Pavilion. The Maréchal de Villeroy gave orders to Lefevre to have the medals made. He obeyed, and brought them to the Maréchal, who presented them to the King. Lefevre was silversmith to the King's household, and as such under the orders of the first gentleman of the chamber. The Duc de Mortemart, who had previously had some tiff with the Maréchal de Villeroy, declared that it devolved upon him to order these medals and present them to the King. He flew into a passion because everything had been done without his knowledge; and complained to the Duc d'Orléans. It was a trifle not worth discussing, and in which the three other gentlemen of the chamber took no part. Thus the Duc de Mortemart, opposed alone to the Maréchal de Villeroy, stood no chance. M. le Duc d'Orléans, with his usual love for *mezzo termine,* said that Lefevre had not made these medals, or brought them to the Maréchal as silversmith, but as having received through the Maréchal the King's order, and that nothing more must be said. The Duc de Mortemart was indignant, and did not spare the Maréchal.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII

THE Abbé Alberoni, having risen by the means I have described, and acquired power by following in the track of the Princesse des Ursins, governed Spain like a master. He had the most ambitious projects. One of his ideas was to drive all strangers, especially the French, out of the West Indies; and he hoped to make use of the Dutch to attain this end. But Holland was too much in the dependence of England.

At home Alberoni proposed many useful reforms, and endeavoured to diminish the expenses of the royal household. He thought, with reason, that a strong navy was the necessary basis of the power of Spain; and to create one he endeavoured to economise the public money. He flattered the King with the idea that next year he would arm forty vessels to protect the commerce of the Spanish Indies. He had the address to boast of his disinterestedness, in that whilst working at all manner of business he had never received any grace from the King, and lived only on fifty pistoles, which the Duke of Parma, his master, gave him every month; and therefore he made gently some complaints against the ingratitude of princes.

Alberoni had persuaded the Queen of Spain to keep her husband shut up, as had the Princesse des Ursins. This was a certain means of governing a prince whose temperament and whose conscience equally attached him to his spouse. He was soon completely governed once more—under lock and key, as it were, night and day. By this means the Queen was jailoress and pris-

oner at the same time. As she was constantly with the King nobody could come to her. Thus Alberoni kept them both shut up, with the key of their prison in his pocket.

One of the chief objects of his ambition was the Cardinal's hat. It would be too long to relate the schemes he set on foot to attain his end. He was opposed by a violent party at Rome; but at last his inflexible will and extreme cunning gained the day. The Pope, no longer able to resist the menaces of the King of Spain, and dreading the vengeance of the all-powerful minister, consented to grant the favour that minister had so pertinaciously demanded. Alberoni was made Cardinal on the 12th of July, 1717. Not a soul approved this promotion when it was announced at the consistory. Not a single cardinal uttered a word in praise of the new *confrère*, but many openly disapproved his nomination. Alberoni's good fortune did not stop here. At the death, some little time after, of the Bishop of Malaga, that rich see, worth thirty thousand écus a-year, was given to him. He received it as the mere introduction to the grandest and richest sees of Spain, when they should become vacant. The King of Spain gave him also twenty thousand ducats, to be levied upon property confiscated for political reasons. Shortly after, Cardinal Arias, Archbishop of Seville, having died, Alberoni was named to this rich archbishopric.

In the middle of his grandeur and good luck he met with an adventure that must have strangely disconcerted him.

I have before explained how Madame des Ursins and the deceased Queen had kept the King of Spain screened from all eyes, inaccessible to all his Court, a very palace-hermit. Alberoni, as I have said, followed their example. He kept the King even more closely

imprisoned than before, and allowed no one, except a few indispensable attendants, to approach him. These attendants were a small number of valets and doctors, two gentlemen of the chamber, one or two ladies, and the majordomo-major of the King. This last post was filled by the Duc d'Escalone, always called Marquis de Villena, in every way one of the greatest noblemen in Spain, and most respected and revered of all, and justly so, for his virtue, his appointment, and his services.

Now the King's doctors are entirely under the authority of the majordomo-major. He ought to be present at all their consultations; the King should take no remedy that he is not told of, or that he does not approve, or that he does not see taken; an account of all the medicines should be rendered to him. Just at this time the King was ill. Villena wished to discharge the duties attached to his post of majordomo-major. Alberoni caused it to be insinuated to him, that the King wished to be at liberty, and that he would be better liked if he kept at home; or had the discretion and civility not to enter the royal chamber, but to ask at the door for news. This was language the Marquis would not understand.

At the end of the grand cabinet of the mirrors was placed a bed, in which the King was laid, in front of the door; and as the room is vast and long, it is a good distance from the door (which leads to the interior) to the place where the bed was. Alberoni again caused the Marquis to be informed that his attentions were troublesome, but the Marquis did not fail to enter as before. At last, in concert with the Queen, the Cardinal resolved to refuse him admission. The Marquis, presenting himself one afternoon, a valet partly opened the door and said, with much confusion, that he was forbidden to let him enter.

"Insolent fellow," replied the Marquis, "stand aside," and he pushed the door against the valet and entered. In front of him was the Queen, seated at the King's pillow; the Cardinal standing by her side, and the privileged few, and not all of them, far away from the bed. The Marquis, who, though full of pride, was but weak upon his legs, leisurely advanced, supported upon his little stick. The Queen and the Cardinal saw him and looked at each other. The King was too ill to notice anything, and his curtains were closed except at the side where the Queen was. Seeing the Marquis approach, the Cardinal made signs, with impatience, to one of the valets to tell him to go away, and immediately after, observing that the Marquis, without replying, still advanced, he went to him, explained to him that the King wished to be alone, and begged him to leave.

"That is not true," said the Marquis; "I have watched you; you have not approached the bed, and the King has said nothing to you."

The Cardinal insisting, and without success, took him by the arm to make him go. The Marquis said he was very insolent to wish to hinder him from seeing the King, and perform his duties. The Cardinal, stronger than his adversary, turned the Marquis round, hurried him towards the door, both talking the while, the Cardinal with measure, the Marquis in no way mincing his words. Tired of being hauled out in this manner, the Marquis struggled, called Alberoni a "little scoundrel," to whom he would teach manners; and in this heat and dust the Marquis, who was weak, fortunately fell into an armchair hard by. Angry at his fall, he raised his little stick and let it fall with all his force upon the ears and the shoulders of the Cardinal, calling him a little scoundrel—a little rascal—a little blackguard, deserving a horsewhipping.

The Cardinal, whom he held with one hand, escaped as well as he could, the Marquis continuing to abuse him, and shaking the stick at him. One of the valets came and assisted him to rise from his armchair, and gain the door; for after this accident his only thought was to leave the room.

The Queen looked on from her chair during all this scene, without stirring or saying a word; and the privileged few in the chamber did not dare to move. I learned all this from every one in Spain; and moreover I asked the Marquis de Villena himself to give me the full details; and he, who was all uprightness and truth, and who had conceived some little friendship for me, related with pleasure all I have written. The two gentlemen of the chamber present also did the same, laughing in their sleeves. One had refused to tell the Marquis to leave the room, and the other had accompanied him to the door. The most singular thing is, that the Cardinal, furious, but surprised beyond measure at the blows he had received, thought only of getting out of reach. The Marquis cried to him from a distance, that but for the respect he owed to the King, and to the state in which he was, he would give him a hundred kicks in the stomach, and haul him out by the ears. I was going to forget this. The King was so ill that he saw nothing.

A quarter of an hour after the Marquis had returned home, he received an order to retire to one of his estates at thirty leagues from Madrid. The rest of the day his house was filled with the most considerable people of Madrid, arriving as they learned the news, which made a furious sensation through the city. He departed the next day with his children. The Cardinal, nevertheless, remained so terrified, that, content with the exile of the Marquis, and with having got rid of him, he did not dare to pass any censure upon him

for the blows he had received. Five or six months afterwards he sent him an order of recall, though the Marquis had not taken the slightest steps to obtain it. What is incredible is, that the adventure, the exile, the return, remained unknown to the King until the fall of the Cardinal! The Marquis would never consent to see him, or to hear him talked of, on any account, after returning, though the Cardinal was the absolute master. His pride was much humiliated by this worthy and just haughtiness; and he was all the more piqued because he left nothing undone in order to bring about a reconciliation, without any other success than that of obtaining fresh disdain, which much increased the public estimation in which this wise and virtuous nobleman was held.

CHAPTER LXXXIX

I MUST not omit to mention an incident which occurred during the early part of the year 1718, and which will give some idea of the character of M. le Duc d'Orléans, already pretty amply described by me.

One day (when Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans had gone to Montmartre, which she quitted soon after) I was walking alone with M. le Duc d'Orléans in the little garden of the Palais Royal, chatting upon various affairs, when he suddenly interrupted me, and turning towards me, said, "I am going to tell you something that will please you."

Thereupon he related to me that he was tired of the life he led, which was no longer in harmony with his age or his desires, and many similar things; that he was resolved to give up his gay parties, pass his evenings more soberly and decently, sometimes at home, often with Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans; that his health would gain thereby, and he should have more time for business; that in a little while I might rely upon it there would be no more suppers of "roués and harlots" (these were his own terms), and that he was going to lead a prudent and reasonable life adapted to his age and state.

I admit that in my extreme surprise I was ravished, so great was the interest I took in him. I testified this to him with overflowing heart, thanking him for his confidence. I said to him that he knew I for a long time had not spoken to him of the indecency of his life, or of the time he lost, because I saw that in so doing I

lost my own; that I had long since despaired of his conduct changing; that this had much grieved me; that he could not be ignorant from all that had passed between us at various times, how much I desired a change, and that he might judge of the surprise and joy his announcement gave me. He assured me more and more that his resolution was fixed, and thereupon I took leave of him, the hour for his *soirée* having arrived.

The next day I learned from people to whom the roués had just related it, that M. le Duc d'Orléans was no sooner at table than he burst out laughing, and applauded his cleverness, saying that he had just laid a trap for me into which I had fallen full length. He recited to them our conversation, at which the joy and applause were marvellous. It is the only time he ever diverted himself at my expense (not to say at his own) in a matter in which the fib he told me, and which I was foolish enough to swallow, surprised by a sudden joy that took from me reflection, did honour to me, though but little to him. I would not gratify him by telling him I knew of his joke, or call to his mind what he had said to me; accordingly he never dared to speak of it.

I never could unravel what fantasy had seized him to lead him to hoax me in this manner, since for many years I had never opened my mouth concerning the life he led, whilst he, on his side, had said not a word to me relating to it. Yet it is true that sometimes being alone with confidential valets, some complaints have escaped him (but never before others) that I ill-treated him, and spoke hastily to him, but all was said in two words, without bitterness, and without accusing me of treating him wrongfully. He spoke truly also; sometimes, when I was exasperated with stupidity or error in important matters which affected him

or the State, or when he had agreed (having been persuaded and convinced by good reasons) to do or not to do some essential thing, and was completely turned from it by his feebleness, his easy-going nature (which he appreciated as well as I)—cruelly did I let out against him. But the trick he most frequently played me before others, one of which my warmth was always dupe, was suddenly to interrupt an important argument by a *sproposito* of buffoonery. I could not stand it; sometimes being so angry that I wished to leave the room. I used to say to him that if he wished to joke I would joke as much as he liked, but to mix the most serious matters with tomfoolery was insupportable. He laughed heartily, and all the more because, as the thing often happened, I ought to have been on my guard; but never was, and was vexed both at the joke and at being surprised; then he returned to business. But princes must sometimes banter and amuse themselves with those whom they treat as friends. Nevertheless, in spite of his occasional banter, he entertained really sincere esteem and friendship for me.

By chance I learnt one day what he really thought of me. I will say it now, so as to leave at once all these trifles. M. le Duc d'Orléans returning one afternoon from the Regency Council at the Tuileries to the Palais Royal with M. le Duc de Chartres (his son) and the Bailli de Conflans (then first gentleman of his chamber) began to talk of me, passing an eulogium upon me I hardly dare to repeat. I know not what had occurred at the Council to occasion it. All that I can say is that he insisted upon his happiness in having a friend so faithful, so unchanging at all times, so useful to him as I was, and always had been; so sure, so true, so disinterested, so firm, such as he could meet with in no one else, and upon whom

he could always count. This eulogy lasted from the Tuileries to the Palais Royal, the Regent saying to his son that he wished to teach him how to make my acquaintance, as a support and a source of happiness (all that I relate here is in his own words); such as he had always found in my friendship and counsel. The Bailli de Conflans, astonished at this abundant eloquence, repeated it to me two days after, and I admit that I never have forgotten it. And here I will say that whatever others might do, whatever I myself (from disgust and vexation at what I saw ill done) might do, the Regent always sought reconciliation with me with shame, confidence, confusion, and he has never found himself in any perplexity that he has not opened his heart to me, and consulted me, without however always following my advice, for he was frequently turned from it by others.

He would never content himself with one mistress. He needed a variety in order to stimulate his taste. I had no more intercourse with them than with his roués. He never spoke of them to me, nor I to him. I scarcely ever knew anything of their adventures. His roués and valets were always eager to present fresh mistresses to him, from which he generally selected one. Amongst these was Madame de Sabran, who had married a man of high rank, but without wealth or merit, in order to be at liberty. There never was a woman so beautiful as she, or of a beauty more regular, more agreeable, more touching, or of a grander or nobler bearing, and yet without affectation. Her air and her manners were simple and natural, making you think she was ignorant of her beauty and of her figure (this last the finest in the world), and when it pleased her she was deceitfully modest. With much intellect she was insinuating, merry, overflowing, dissipated, not bad-hearted, charming, especially at

table. In a word, she was all M. le Duc d'Orléans wanted, and soon became his mistress without prejudice to the rest.

As neither she nor her husband had a rap, they were ready for anything, and yet they did not make a large fortune. One of the chamberlains of the Regent, with an annual salary of six thousand livres, having received another appointment, Madame de Sabran thought six thousand livres a year too good to be lost, and asked for the post for her husband. She cared so little for him, by the way, that she called him her "mastiff." It was she, who, supping with M. le Duc d'Orléans and his roués, wittily said, that princes and lackeys had been made of one material, separated by Providence at the creation from that out of which all other men had been made.

All the Regent's mistresses had one by one their turn. Fortunately they had little power, were not initiated into any state secrets, and received but little money.

The Regent amused himself with them, and treated them in other respects exactly as they deserved to be treated.

CHAPTER XC

IT is time now that I should speak of matters of very great importance, which led to changes that filled my heart with excessive joy, such as it had never known before.

For a long time past the Parliament had made many encroachments upon the privileges belonging to the Dukes. Even under the late King it had begun these impudent enterprises, and no word was said against it; for nothing gave the King greater pleasure than to mix all ranks together in a caldron of confusion. He hated and feared the nobility, was jealous of their power, which in former reigns had often so successfully balanced that of the crown; he was glad therefore of any opportunity which presented itself that enabled him to see our order weakened and robbed of its dignity.

The Parliament grew bolder as its encroachments one by one succeeded. It began to fancy itself armed with powers of the highest kind. It began to imagine that it possessed all the authority of the English Parliament, forgetting that that assembly is charged with the legislative administration of the country, that it has the right to make laws and repeal laws, and that the monarch can do but little, comparatively speaking, without the support and sanction of this representative chamber; whereas, our own Parliament is but a tribunal of justice, with no control or influence over the royal authority or state affairs.

But, as I have said, success gave it new impudence. Now that the King was dead, at whose name alone it

trembled, this assembly thought that a fine opportunity had come to give its power the rein. It had to do with a Regent, notorious for his easy-going disposition, his indifference to form and rule, his dislike to all vigorous measures. It fancied that victory over such an opponent would be easy; that it could successfully overcome all the opposition he could put in action, and in due time make his authority secondary to its own. The Chief-President of the Parliament, I should observe, was the principal promoter of these sentiments. He was the bosom friend of M. and Madame du Maine, and by them was encouraged in his views. Incited by his encouragement, he seized an opportunity which presented itself now, to throw down the glove to M. le Duc d'Orléans, in the name of the Parliament, and to prepare for something like a struggle. The Parliament of Brittany had recently manifested a very turbulent spirit, and this was an additional encouragement to that of Paris.

At first the Parliament men scarcely knew what to lay hold of and bring forward, as an excuse for the battle. They wished of course to gain the applause of the people as protectors of their interests—likewise those who for their private ends try to trouble and embroil the State—but could not at first see their way clear. They sent for Trudaine, Prévôt des Marchands, Councillor of State, to give an account to them of the state of the Hôtel de Ville funds. He declared that they had never been so well paid, and that there was no cause of complaint against the government. Baffled upon this point, they fastened upon a edict, recently rendered, respecting the money of the realm. They deliberated thereon, deputed a commission to examine the matter, made a great fuss, and came to the conclusion that the edict would, if acted upon, be very prejudicial to the country.

Thus much done, the Parliament assembled anew on Friday morning, the 17th of June, 1718, and again in the afternoon. At the end they decided upon sending a deputation to the Regent, asking him to suspend the operation of the edict, introduce into it the changes suggested by their body, and then send it to them to be registered. The deputation was sent, and said all it had to say.

On the morrow the Parliament again assembled, morning and afternoon, and sent a message to the Regent, saying, it would not separate until it had received his reply. That reply was very short and simple. The Regent sent word that he was tired of the meddling interference of the Parliament (this was not the first time, let me add, that he experienced it), that he had ordered all the troops in Paris, and round about, to hold themselves ready to march, and that the King must be obeyed. Such was in fact true. He had really ordered the soldiers to keep under arms and to be supplied with powder and shot.

The message did not intimidate the Parliament. The next day, Sunday, the Chief-President, accompanied by all the other presidents, and by several councillors, came to the Palais Royal. Although, as I have said, the leader of his company, and the right-hand man of M. and Madame du Maine, he wished for his own sake to keep on good terms with the Regent, and at the same time to preserve all authority over his brethren, so as to have them under his thumb. His discourse then to the Regent commenced with many praises and much flattery, in order to smooth the way for the three fine requests he wound up with. The first of these was that the edict should be sent to the Parliament to be examined, and to suffer such changes as the members should think fit to introduce, and then be registered; the second, that the King should pay

attention to their remonstrances in an affair of this importance, which they believed prejudicial to the State; the third, that the works recently undertaken at the Mint for recasting the specie should be suspended!

To these modest requests the Regent replied that the edict had been registered at the Cour des Monnaies, which is a superior court, and consequently sufficient for such registration; that there was only a single instance of an edict respecting the money of the realm having been sent before the Parliament, and then out of pure civility; that the matter had been well sifted, and all its inconveniences weighed; that it was to the advantage of the State to put in force this edict; that the works of the Mint could not be interfered with in any way; finally, that the King must be obeyed! It was quite true that the edict had been sent to the Parliament out of courtesy, but at the suggestion of the Regent's false and treacherous confidants, valets of the Parliament, such as the Maréchals de Villeroy, and Huxelles, and Besons, Canillac, Effiat, and Noailles.

Notwithstanding the decisive answer they had received, the Parliament met the very next day, and passed a decree against the edict. The council of the regency, at its sitting on the afternoon of the same day, abrogated this decree. Thus, since war was in a measure declared between the Regent's authority and that of the Parliament, the orders emanating from the one were disputed by the other, and *vice versa*. A nice game of shuttlecock this, which it was scarce likely could last long!

The Regent was determined to be obeyed. He prohibited, therefore, the printing and posting up of the decree of the Parliament. Soldiers of the guards, too, were placed in the markets to hinder the refusal of the new money which had been issued. The fact is, by the edict which had been passed, the louis worth

thirty livres was taken at thirty-six livres, and the crown piece, worth a hundred sous, at six livres instead of five. By this edict also government notes were made legal tender until the new money should be ready. The finances were thus relieved, and the King gained largely from the recasting of the coin. But private people lost by this increase, which much exceeded the intrinsic value of the metal used, and which caused everything to rise in price. Thus the Parliament had a fine opportunity for trumpeting forth its solicitude for the public interest, and did not fail to avail itself of it.

During the night a councillor of the Parliament was surprised on horseback in the streets tearing down and disfiguring the decree of the Regency Council, which abrogated that of the Parliament. He was taken to prison.

On Monday, the 27th of June, the Chief-President, at the head of all the other presidents, and of forty councillors, went to the Tuileries, and in the presence of the Regent read the wire-drawn remonstrance of the Parliament upon this famous edict. The Keeper of the Seals said that in a few days the King would reply. Accordingly on Saturday, the 2nd of July, the same deputation came again to the Tuileries to hear the reply. The Regent and all the Princes of the blood were there, the bastards also. Argenson, who from lieutenant of police had been made keeper of the seals, and who in his former capacity had often been ill-used—nay, even attacked by the Parliament—took good care to show his superiority over that assembly. He answered that deputation in the name of the King, and concluded by saying that the edict would in no way be altered, but would receive complete application. The parliamentary gentlemen did not expect so firm a reply, and withdrew, much mortified.

They were not, however, vanquished. They reassembled on the 11th and 12th of August, and spat forth all their venom in another decree specially aimed at the authority of the Regent. By this decree the administration of the finances was henceforth entirely to be at the mercy of the Parliament. Law, the Scotchman, who, under the favour of M. le Duc d'Orléans, had been allowed some influence over the State money matters, was to possess that influence no longer; in fact, all power on the part of the Regent over the finances was to be taken from him.

After this the Parliament had to take but one step in order to become the guardian of the King and the master of the realm (as in fact it madly claimed to be), the Regent more at its mercy than the King, and perhaps as exposed as King Charles I. of England. Our parliamentary gentlemen began as humbly as those of England, and though, as I have said, their assembly was but a simple court of justice, limited in its jurisdiction like the other courts of the realm, to judge disputes between private people, yet by dint of hammering upon the word parliament they believed themselves not less important than their English brethren, who form the legislative assembly, and represent all the nation.

M. and Madame du Maine had done not a little to bring about these fancies, and they continued in secret to do more. Madame du Maine, it may be recollected, had said that she would throw the whole country into combustion, in order not to lose her husband's prerogative. She was as good as her word. Encouraged doubtless by the support they received from this precious pair, the Parliament continued on its mad career of impudent presumption, pride, and arrogance. It assembled on the 22nd of August, and ordered inquiry to be made of the Regent as to what had become of all the state notes that had been passed at the Chamber

of Justice; those which had been given for the lotteries that were held every month; those which had been given for the Mississippi or Western Company; finally, those which had been taken to the Mint since the change in the specie.

These questions were communicated to the Regent by the King's officers. In reply he turned his back upon them, and went away into his cabinet, leaving these people slightly bewildered. Immediately after this occurrence it was rumoured that a Bed of Justice would soon be held. The Regent had not then thought of summoning such an important assembly, and his weakness and vacillation were such that no one thought he would dare to do so.

The memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, of Joly, of Madame Motteville, had turned all heads. These books had become so fashionable, that in no class was the man or woman who did not have them continually in hand. Ambition, the desire for novelty, the skill of those who circulated these books, made the majority of people hope to cut a figure or make a fortune, and persuaded them there was as little lack of personages as in the last minority. People looked upon Law as the Mazarin of the day—(they were both foreign)—upon M. and Madame du Maine, as the chiefs of the Fronde; the weakness of M. le Duc d'Orléans was compared to that of the Queen-mother, and so on.

To say the truth, all tended towards whatever was extreme—moderation seemed forgotten—and it was high time the Regent aroused himself from a supineness which rendered him contemptible, and which emboldened his enemies and those of the State to brave all and undertake all. This lethargy, too, disheartened his servants, and made all healthy activity on their part impossible. It had at last led him to the very verge of the precipice, and the realm he governed to

within an inch of the greatest confusion. He had need, indeed, to be up and doing!

The Regent, without having the horrible vice or the favourites of Henry III., had even more than that monarch become notorious for his daily debauches, his indecency, and his impiety. Like Henry III., too, he was betrayed by his most intimate councillors and domestics. This treachery pleased him (as it had pleased that King) because it induced him to keep idle, now from fear, now from interest, now from disdain, and now from policy. This torpor was agreeable to him because it was in conformity with his humour and his tastes, and because he regarded those who counselled it as good, wise, and enlightened people, not blinded by their private interests, but seeing clearly things as they were; while he was importuned with opinions and explanations which would have disclosed the true state of affairs and suggested remedies.

He looked upon such people as offered these opinions and explanations as impetuous counsellors, who hurried everything and suggested everything, who wished to discount the future in order to satisfy their ambition, their aversion, their different passions. He kept on his guard against them; he applauded himself for not being their dupe. Now, he laughed at them; often he allowed them to believe he appreciated their reasoning, that he was going to act and rouse from his lethargy. He amused them thus, gained time, and diverted himself afterwards with the others. Sometimes he replied coldly to them, and when they pressed him too much he allowed his suspicions to peep out.

Long since I had perceived M. le Duc d'Orléans' mode of action. At the first movements of the Parliament, of the bastards, and of those who had usurped the name of nobility, I had warned him. I had done so again as soon as I saw the cadence and

the harmony of the designs in progress. I had pointed out to him their inevitable sequel; how easy it was to hinder them at the commencement; how difficult after, especially for a person of his character and disposition. But I was not the man for such work as this. I was the oldest, the most attached, the freest spoken of all his servitors; I had given him the best proofs of this in the most critical times of his life, and in the midst of his universal abandonment; the counsels I had offered him in these sad days he had always found for his good; he was accustomed to repose in me the most complete confidence; but, whatever opinion he might have of me, and of my truth and probity, he was on his guard against what he called my warmth, and against the love I had for my dignity, so attacked by the usurpations of the bastards, the designs of the Parliament, and the modern fancies of a sham nobility. As soon as I perceived his suspicions I told him so, and I added that, content with having done my duty as citizen and as his servitor, I would say no more on the subject. I kept my word. For more than a year I had not of myself opened my mouth thereon. If he was sometimes spoken to before me, and I could not keep quite silent without being suspected of sulking or pique, I carelessly said something indefinite, with as little meaning in it as possible, and calculated to make us drop the subject.

Judge of my surprise, therefore, when as I was working as usual one afternoon with the Regent, he interrupted me to speak with bitterness of the Parliament. I replied with my accustomed coldness and pretended negligence, and continued my business. He stopped me, and said that he saw very well that I would not reply to him concerning the Parliament. I admitted it was true, and added that he must long since have perceived this. Pressed and pressed be-

yond measure, I coldly remarked that he could not but remember what I had said to him of the Parliament both before and after his accession to the regency, that other counsels had prevailed over mine, and that finding my opinions were misinterpreted by him, I had resolved to hold my tongue, and had done so. As the subject was now reopened I reminded him of a prophecy I had uttered long before, that he had missed the opportunity of governing the Parliament when he might have done so with a frown, and that step by step he would allow himself to be conducted by his easy-going disposition, until he found himself on the very verge of the abyss; that if he wished to recover his position he must begin at once to retrace his steps, or lose his footing for ever!

Such strong words (from my mouth they had been rare of late), pronounced with a slow, firm coldness, as though I were indifferent to the course he might adopt, made him feel how little capable I believed him of vigorous and sustained action, and what trifling trouble I took to make him adopt my views. Dubois, Argenson, and Law had also spoken to him, urging him to take strong measures against the Parliament; the effect of my speech was therefore marvellous.

It was indeed high time to do something, as I have before remarked. The Parliament, we found, after passing its last decree, had named a commission to inquire into the financial edict; this commission was working in the utmost secrecy; a number of witnesses had already been examined, and preparations were quietly making to arrest Law some fine morning, and hang him three hours after within the enclosure of the Palais de Justice.

Immediately this fact became known, the Duc de la Force and Fagon (Councillor of State) went to the Regent—'twas on the 19th of August, 1718—and

spoke to him with such effect, that he ordered them to assemble with Law that very day at my house in order to see what was to be done. They came, in fact, and this was the first intimation I had that the Regent had begun to feel the gravity of his position, and that he was ready to do something. In this conference at my house the firmness of Law, hitherto so great, was shaken so that tears escaped him. Arguments did not satisfy us at first, because the question could only be decided by force, and we could not rely upon that of the Regent. The safe-conduct with which Law was supplied would not have stopped the Parliament an instant. On every side we were embarrassed. Law, more dead than alive, knew not what to say; much less what to do. His safety appeared to us the most pressing matter to ensure. If he had been taken it would have been all over with him before the ordinary machinery of negotiation (delayed as it was likely to be by the weakness of the Regent) could have been set in motion; certainly, before there would have been leisure to think of better, or to send a regiment of guards to force open the Palais de Justice; a critical remedy at all times, and grievous to the last degree, even when it succeeds; frightful, if instead of Law, only his suspended corpse had been found!

I advised Law, therefore, to retire to the Palais Royal, and occupy the chamber of Nancré, his friend, then away in Spain. Law breathed again at this suggestion (approved by de la Force and Fagon), and put it in execution the moment he left my house. He might have been kept in safety at the Bank, but I thought the Palais Royal would be better: that his retirement there would create more effect, and induce the Regent to hold firm to his purpose, besides allowing his Royal Highness to see the financier whenever he pleased.

CHAPTER XCI

THIS done I proposed, and the others approved my proposition, that a Bed of Justice should be held as the only means left by which the abrogation of the parliamentary decrees could be registered. But while our arguments were moving, I stopped them all short by a reflection which came into my mind. I represented to my guests that the Duc du Maine was in secret the principal leader of the Parliament, and was closely allied with Maréchal de Villeroy; that both would oppose might and main the assembling of a Bed of Justice, so contrary to their views, to their schemes, to their projects; that to hinder it they, as guardians of the young King, would plead on his behalf, the heat, which was in fact extreme, the fear of the crowd, of the fatigue, of the bad air; that they would assume a pathetic tone in speaking of the King's health, calculated to embarrass the Regent; that if he persisted they would protest against everything which might happen to His Majesty; declare, perhaps, that in order not to share the blame, they would not accompany him; that the King, prepared by them, would grow frightened, perhaps, and would not go to the Parliament without them; that then all would be lost, and the powerlessness of the Regent, so clearly manifested, might rapidly lead to the most disastrous results.

These remarks stopped short our arguments, but I had not started objections without being prepared with a remedy for them. I said, "Let the Bed of Justice be held at the Tuileries; let it be kept a profound secret

until the very morning it is to take place; and let those who are to attend it be told so only a few hours before they are to assemble. By these means no time will be allowed for anybody to object to the proceeding, to plead the health of the King, the heat of the weather, or to interfere with the arrangement of the troops which it will be necessary to make."

We stopped at this: Law went away, and I dictated to Fagon the full details of my scheme, by which secrecy was to be ensured and all obstacles provided against. We finished about nine o'clock in the evening, and I counselled Fagon to carry what he had written to the Abbé Dubois, who had just returned from England with new credit over the mind of his master.

The next day I repaired to the Palais Royal about four o'clock. A moment after La Vrillière came and relieved me of the company of Grancey and Broglio, two roués, whom I had found in the grand cabinet, in the cool, familiarly, without wigs. When M. le Duc d'Orléans was free he led me into the cabinet, behind the grand salon, by the Rue de Richelieu, and on entering said he was at the crisis of his regency, and that everything was needed in order to sustain him on this occasion. He added that he was resolved to strike a heavy blow at the Parliament; that he much approved my proposition respecting the Bed of Justice at the Tuileries, and that it would be held exactly as I had suggested.

I was delighted at his animation, and at the firmness he appeared to possess, and after having well discussed with him all the inconveniences of my plan, and their remedy, we came at last to a very important matter, the mechanical means, so to speak, by which that plan was to be put in force. There was one thing to be provided for, which may appear an exceedingly insig-

nificant matter, but which in truth was of no light importance. When a Bed of Justice is held, seats one above another must be provided for those who take part in it. No room in the Tuileries possessed such seats; and how erect them without noise, without exciting remarks, without causing inquiries and suspicions, which must inevitably lead to the discovery and perhaps thereby to the failure of our project? I had not forgotten this difficulty, however, and I said to the Regent I would go in secret to Fontanieu, who controlled the crown furniture, explain all to him, and arrange matters with him so that these seats should be erected at the very last moment, in time for our purpose, but too late to supply information that could be made use of by our enemies. I hurried off accordingly, as soon as I could get away, in search of Fontanieu.

I had already had some relations with him, for he had married his daughter to the son of the sister of my brother-in-law, M. de Lauzun. I had done him some little service, and had therefore every reason to expect he would serve me on this occasion. Judge of my annoyance when upon reaching his house I learned that he had gone almost to the other end of the town, to the Marais, to conduct a suit at law, in which Monsieur and Madame de Lauzun were concerned, respecting an estate at Rondon they claimed!

The porter seeing me so vexed at being obliged to journey so far in search of Fontanieu, said, that if I would go and speak to Madame Fontanieu, he would see if his master was not still in the neighbourhood, at a place he intended to visit before going to the Marais. I acted upon this suggestion and went to Madame Fontanieu, whom I found alone. I was forced to talk to her of the suit of Monsieur and Madame de Lauzun, which I pretended was the business I came upon, and

cruelly did I rack my brains to say enough to keep up the conversation. When Fontanieu arrived, for he was soon found, fortunately, I was thrown into another embarrassment, for I had all the pains in the world to get away from Madame Fontanieu, who, aided by her husband, begged me not to take the trouble to descend but to discuss the subject where I was. As she was as well informed upon the case as he, I thought once or twice I should never escape her. At last, however, I led away Fontanieu, by dint of compliments to his wife, in which I expressed my unwillingness to weary her with this affair.

When Fontanieu and I were alone down in his cabinet, I remained some moments talking to him upon the same subject, to allow the valets who had opened the doors for us time to retire. Then, to his great astonishment, I went outside to see if there were no listeners, and carefully closed the doors. After this I said to Fontanieu that I had not come concerning the affair of Madame de Lauzun, but upon another very different, which demanded all his industry, a secrecy proof against every trial, and which M. le Duc d'Orléans had charged me to communicate to him; but that before explaining myself he must know whether his Royal Highness could certainly count upon him.

It is strange what an impression the wildest absurdities leave if they are spread abroad with art. The first thing Fontanieu did was to tremble violently all over and become whiter than his shirt. With difficulty he stammered out a few words to the effect that he would do for M. le Duc d'Orléans as much as his duty would permit him to do. I smiled, looking fixedly at him, and this smile warned him apparently that he owed me an excuse for not being quite at ease upon any affair that passed through my hands; he directly made me one, at all events, and with the confusion

of a man who sees that his first view has dazzled the second, and who, full of this first view, does not show anything, yet lets all be seen.

I reassured him as well as I could, and said that I had answered for him to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and afterwards that a Bed of Justice was wanted, for the construction of which we had need of him.

Scarcely had I explained this, than the poor fellow began to take breath, as though escaping from stifling oppression, or a painful operation for the stone, and asked me if that was what I wanted?

He promised everything, so glad was he to be let off thus cheaply, and in truth he kept to his word, both as to the secret and the work. He had never seen a Bed of Justice, and had not the slightest notion what it was like. I sat down on his bureau, and drew out the design of one. I dictated to him the explanations in the margin, because I did not wish them to be in my handwriting. I talked more than an hour with him; I disarranged his furniture, the better to show to him the order of the assembly, and explained to him what was to be done, so that all might be carried to the Tuileries and erected in a very few moments. When I found I had made everything sufficiently clear, and he had understood me, I returned to the Palais Royal as though recollecting something, being already in the streets, to deceive my people.

A servant awaited me at the top of the staircase, and the concierge of the Palais Royal at the door of M. le Duc d'Orléans' room, with orders to beg me to write. It was the sacred hour of the roués and the supper, at which all idea of business was banished. I wrote, therefore, to the Regent in his winter cabinet what I had just done, not without some little indignation that he could not give up his pleasure for an affair of this importance. I was obliged to beg the concierge not

to give my note to M. le Duc d'Orléans unless he were in a state to read it and to burn it afterwards.

Our preparations for the Bed of Justice continued to be actively but silently made during the next few days. In the course of the numberless discussions which arose upon the subject, it was agreed, after much opposition on my part, to strike a blow, not only at the Parliament, but at M. du Maine, who had fomented its discontent. M. le Duc, who had been admitted to our councils, and who was heart and soul against the bastards, proposed that at the Bed of Justice the education of the young King should be taken out of the control of M. du Maine and placed in his hands. He proposed also that the title of Prince of the Blood should be taken from him, with all the privileges it conferred, and that he should be reduced to the rank of a simple Duke and Peer, taking his place among the rest according to the date of his erection; thus, at a bound, going down to the bottom of the peerage!

Should these memoirs ever see the light, every one who reads them will be able to judge how such a proposition as this harmonised with my personal wishes. I had seen the bastards grow in rank and importance with an indignation and disgust I could scarcely contain. I had seen favour after favour heaped upon them by the late King, until he crowned all by elevating them to the rank of Princes of the Blood in defiance of all law, of all precedent, of all decency, if I must say the word. What I felt at this accumulation of honours I have more than once expressed; what I did to oppose such monstrous innovations has also been said. No man could be more against M. du Maine than I, and yet I opposed this proposition of M. le Duc because I thought one blow was enough at a time, and that it might be dangerous to attempt

the two at once. M. du Maine had supporters, nay, he was at the head of a sort of party; strip him of the important post he held, and what might not his rage, his disappointment, and his wounded ambition lead him to attempt? Civil war, perhaps, would be the result of his disgrace.

Again and again I urged these views, not only upon M. le Duc d'Orléans, but upon M. le Duc. Nay, with this latter I had two long stolen interviews in the Tuileries Gardens, where we spoke without constraint, and exhausted all our arguments. But M. le Duc was not to be shaken, and as I could do no more than I had done to move him, I was obliged at last to give in. It was resolved, however, that disgrace should fall upon M. du Maine alone; that his brother, the Comte de Toulouse, on account of the devotion to the State he had ever exhibited, and his excellent conduct since the death of the late King, should, when stripped of his title like the other, receive it back again the moment after, in acknowledgment of the services he had rendered to the Regent as Councillor of State, and as an expression of personal good feeling towards him, which his excellent qualities so justly merited.

I returned home from my last interview with M. le Duc, and went to mass at the Jacobins, to which I entered from my garden. It was not without a distracted mind. But I prayed to God sincerely and earnestly to guide my steps, so that I might labour for His glory and the good of the State without private ends. My prayer was heard, and in the sequel I had nothing to reproach myself with. I followed the straight road without turning to the right or to the left.

Fontanieu was waiting for me in my house as I returned home from mass, and I was obliged to listen to his questions and to reply to them, as though I had

nothing on my mind. I arranged my chamber like a Bed of Justice, I made him understand several things connected with the ceremonial that he had not understood before, and that it was essential he should in no way omit. Thus everything went on satisfactorily, and I began to count the hours, by day as well as by night, until the great day was to arrive on which the arrogant pride of the Parliament was to receive a check, and the false plumage which adorned the bastards was to be plucked from them.

In the midst of the sweet joy that I felt, no bitterness entered. I was satisfied with the part I had played in this affair, satisfied that I had acted sincerely, honestly, that I had not allowed my own private motives to sway me; that in the interests of the State, as opposed to my own interests, I had done all in my power to save the Duc du Maine. And yet I did not dare to give myself up to the rosy thoughts suggested by the great event, now so rapidly approaching. I toyed with them instead of allowing myself to embrace them. I shrunk from them as it were like a cold lover who fears the too ardent caresses of his mistress. I could not believe that the supreme happiness I had so long pined for was at last so near. Might not M. le Duc d'Orléans falter at the last moment? Might not all our preparations, so carefully conducted, so cleverly planned, weigh upon his feebleness until they fell to the ground? It was not improbable. He was often firm in promises. How often was he firm in carrying them out? All these questions, all these restless doubts—natural as it appears to me under the circumstances—winged their way through my mind, and kept me excited and feverish as though life and death were hanging on one thread.

In the midst of my reflections, a messenger from M.

le Duc d'Orléans, Millain by name, arrived at my house. It was on the afternoon of Thursday, the 25th of August, 1718. His message was simple. M. le Duc d'Orléans was in the same mood as ever, and I was to join him at the Palais Royal, according to previous agreement, at eight o'clock in the evening. The Bed of Justice was to be held on the morrow.

Never was kiss given to a beautiful mistress sweeter than that which I imprinted upon the fat old face of this charming messenger! A close embrace, eagerly repeated, was my first reply, followed afterwards by an overflow of feeling for M. le Duc, and for Millain even, who had worthily served in this great undertaking.

The rest of the day I passed at home with the Abbé Dubois, Fagon, and the Duc de la Force, one after the other finishing up our work. We provided against everything. If the Parliament refused to come to the Tuileries, its interdiction was determined on: if any of the members attempted to leave Paris they were to be arrested; troops were to be assembled in order to carry out the Regent's orders; we left no accident without its remedy.

The Abbé Dubois arranged a little code of signals, such as crossing the legs, shaking a handkerchief, or other simple gestures, to be given the first thing in the morning to the officers of the body-guards chosen to be in attendance in the room where the Bed of Justice was to be held. They were to fix their eyes upon the Regent, and when he made any of the above signals, immediately to act upon it according to their written instructions. The Abbé Dubois also drew out a sort of programme for M. le Duc d'Orléans, of the different orders he was to give during the night, fixing the hour for each, so that they might not arrive a minute

too soon or a minute too late, and secrecy thus be maintained to the very latest moment.

Towards eight o'clock in the evening I went to the Palais Royal. I was horror-struck to find M. le Duc d'Orléans in bed with fever, as he said; I felt his pulse. Fever, he had, sure enough; perhaps from excitement caused by the business in hand. I said to him it was only fatigue of body and mind, of which he would be quit in twenty-four hours; he, on his side, protested that whatever it might be, he would hold the Bed of Justice on the morrow. M. le Duc, who had just entered, was at his pillow; the chamber lighted by a single wax candle. We sat down, M. le Duc and I, and passed in review the orders given and to give, not without much apprehension on account of this fever, come so strangely out of season to the healthiest man in the world, and who had never had it before.

I exhorted the Regent to take as much repose as he could, so that he might be fully able to execute the great work of the morrow, the safety of the Regency itself being at stake. After this I felt his pulse again, not without fear. I assured him, however, his illness would be nothing; without, it is true, being too sure of it myself. I took my leave about ten o'clock, and went out of the room with Millain. When I found myself alone with him in the cabinet, through which we passed, I embraced him with an extreme pleasure. We had entered by the backstairs; we descended by the same, so as not to be observed. It was dark, so that on both occasions we were obliged to grope our way. Upon arriving at the bottom I could not refrain from again embracing Millain, so great was my pleasure, and we separated each to his home.

The arrangements respecting the troops and for summoning the Parliament, etc., were all carried out to the letter during the night and early morning. At

the hours agreed upon M. le Duc d'Orléans gave the various orders. About four o'clock in the morning the Duc du Maine, as colonel-general of the Swiss guards, was aroused. He had not been in bed above an hour, having just returned from a fête given at the arsenal by Madame du Maine. He was doubtless much astonished, but contained himself, hid his fear, and sent at once to instruct his companies of Swiss guards of the orders they were to execute. I don't think he slept very well after this, uncertain as he must have been what was going to happen. But I never knew what he or Madame du Maine did after being thus rudely disturbed.

Towards five o'clock in the morning drums began to be heard throughout the town, and soon soldiers were seen in movement. At six o'clock a message was sent to the Parliament requesting it to attend at the Tuileries. The reply was that the request should be obeyed. The members thereupon debated whether they should go to the Tuileries in coaches or on foot. The last mode was adopted as being the most ordinary, and in the hope of stirring the people and arriving at the Tuileries with a yelling crowd. What happened will be related in its place.

At the same time, horsemen went to all the Peers and officers of the Crown, and to all the chevaliers of the order, the governors and lieutenant-governors of the provinces (who were to accompany the King), informing them of the Bed of Justice. The Comte de Toulouse had been to supper at the house of M. de Nevers, near Saint-Denis, and did not return until late into the night. The French and Swiss guards were under arms in various quarters; the watch, the light horse, and the two companies of musketeers all ready in their barracks; the usual guard at the Tuileries.

If I had slept but little during the last eight days, I slept still less that night, so near to the most considerable events. I rose before six o'clock, and shortly after received my summons to the Bed of Justice, on the back of which was a note that I was not to be awakened, a piece of politeness due to the knowledge of the bearer, who was aware that this summons would teach me nothing I did not know. All the others had been awakened, surprised thereby to an extent that may be imagined.

Towards eight o'clock in the morning a messenger from M. le Duc d'Orléans came to remind me of the Regency Council at eight o'clock, and to attend it in my mantle. I dressed myself in black, because I had only that suit with a mantle, and another, a magnificent one in cloth of gold, which I did not wish to wear lest it should cause the remark to be made, though much out of season, that I wished to insult the Parliament and M. du Maine. I took two gentlemen with me in my coach, and I went in order to witness all that was to take place. I was at the same time full of fear, hope, joy, reflection, and mistrust of M. le Duc d'Orléans' weakness, and all that might result from it. I was also firmly resolved to do my best, whatever might happen, but without appearing to know anything, and without eagerness, and I resolved to show presence of mind, attention, circumspection, modesty, and much moderation.

Upon leaving my house I went to Valincourt, who lived behind the hôtel of the Comte de Toulouse. He was a very honourable man, of much intellect, moving among the best company, secretary-general of the navy, devoted to the Comte de Toulouse ever since his early youth, and possessing all his confidence. I did not wish to leave the Comte de Toulouse in any personal fear, or expose him to be led away by his

brother. I sent therefore for Valincourt, whom I knew intimately, to come and speak to me. He came half-dressed, terrified at the rumours flying over the town, and eagerly asked me what they all meant. I drew him close to me and said, "Listen attentively to me, and lose not a word. Go immediately to M. le Comte de Toulouse, tell him he may trust in my word, tell him to be discreet, and that things are about to happen to others which may displease him, but that not a hair of his head shall be touched. I hope he will not have a moment's uneasiness. Go! and lose not an instant."

Valincourt held me in a tight embrace. "Ah, Monsieur," said he, "we foresaw that at last there would be a storm. It is well merited, but not by M. le Comte, who will be eternally obliged to you." And he went immediately with my message to the Comte de Toulouse, who never forgot that I saved him from the fall of his brother.

CHAPTER XCII

I ARRIVED at the grand court of the Tuileries about eight o'clock without having remarked anything extraordinary on the way. The coaches of the Duc de Noailles, of Maréchal de Villars, of Maréchal d'Huxelles, and of some others were already there. I ascended without finding many people about, and directed the two doors of the Salle des Gardes, which were closed, to be opened. The Bed of Justice was prepared in the grand ante-chamber, where the King was accustomed to eat. I stopped a short time to see if everything was in proper order, and felicitated Fontanieu in a low voice. He said to me in the same manner that he had arrived at the Tuileries with his workmen and materials at six o'clock in the morning; that everything was so well constructed and put up that the King had not heard a sound; that his chief *valet de chambre,* having left the room for some commission about seven o'clock in the morning, had been much astonished upon seeing this apparatus; that the Maréchal de Villeroy had only heard of it through him, and that the seats had been erected with such little noise that nobody had heard anything. After having well examined everything with my eyes I advanced to the throne, then being finished; wishing to enter the second ante-chamber, some servants came to me, saying that I could not go in, all being locked up. I asked where I was to await the assembling of the Council, and was admitted to a room upstairs, where I found a good number of people already congregated.

After chatting some time with the Keeper of the Seals, the arrival of M. le Duc d'Orléans was announced. We finished what we had to say, and went downstairs separately, not wishing to be seen together.

The Council was held in a room which ever since the very hot weather the King had slept in. The hangings of his bed, and of the Maréchal de Villeroy's were drawn back. The Council table was placed at the foot of one of the beds. Upon entering the adjoining chamber I found many people whom the first rumours of such an unexpected occurrence had no doubt led there, and among the rest some of the Council. M. le Duc d'Orléans was in the midst of a crowd at the end of the room, and, as I afterwards learned, had just seen the Duc du Maine without speaking to him, or being spoken to.

After a passing glance upon this crowd I entered the Council chamber. I found scattered there the majority of those who composed the Council with serious and troubled looks, which increased my seriousness. Scarcely anybody spoke; and each, standing or seated here and there, kept himself in his place. The better to examine all, I joined nobody. A moment after M. le Duc d'Orléans entered with a gay, easy, untroubled air, and looked smilingly upon the company. I considered this of good augury. Immediately afterwards I asked him his news. He replied aloud that he was tolerably well; then approaching my ear, added that, except when aroused to give his orders, he had slept very well, and that he was determined to hold firm. This infinitely pleased me, for it seemed to me by his manner that he was in earnest, and I briefly exhorted him to remain so.

Came, afterwards, M. le Duc, who pretty soon approached me, and asked if I augured well from the

Regent, and if he would remain firm. M. le Duc had an air of exceeding gaiety, which was perceptible to those behind the scenes. The Duc de Noailles devoured everything with his eyes, which sparkled with anger because he had not been initiated into the secret of this great day.

In due time M. du Maine appeared in his mantle, entering by the King's little door. Never before had he made so many or such profound reverences as he did now—though he was not usually very stingy of them—then standing alone, resting upon his stick near the Council table, he looked around at everybody. Then and there, being in front of him, with the table between us, I made him the most smiling bow I had ever given him, and did it with extreme volupty. He repaid me in the same coin, and continued to fix his eyes upon everybody in turn, his face agitated, and nearly always speaking to himself.

A few minutes after M. le Duc came to me, begging me to exhort M. le Duc d'Orléans to firmness: then the Keeper of the Seals came forth for the same purpose. M. le Duc d'Orléans himself approached me to say something a moment afterwards, and he had no sooner quitted my side than M. le Duc, impatient and troubled, came to know in what frame of mind was the Regent. I told him good in a monosyllable, and sent him away.

I know not if these movements, upon which all eyes were fixed, began to frighten the Duc du Maine, but no sooner had M. le Duc joined the Regent, after quitting me, than the Duc du Maine went to speak to the Maréchal de Villeroy and to D'Effiat, both seated at the end of the room towards the King's little door, their backs to the wall. They did not rise for the Duc du Maine, who remained standing opposite, and quite near them, all three holding long discourses, like

people who deliberate with embarrassment and surprise, as it appeared to me by the faces of the two I saw, and which I tried not to lose sight of.

During this time M. le Duc d'Orléans and M. le Duc spoke to each other near the window and the ordinary entrance door; the Keeper of the Seals, who was near, joined them. At this moment M. le Duc turned round a little, which gave me the opportunity to make signs to him of the other conference, which he immediately saw. I was alone, near the Council table, very attentive to everything, and the others scattered about began to become more so. A little while after the Duc du Maine placed himself where he had been previously: the two he quitted remained as before. M. du Maine was thus again in front of me, the table between us. I observed that he had a bewildered look, and that he spoke to himself more than ever.

The Comte de Toulouse arrived as the Regent had just quitted the two persons with whom he had been talking. The Comte de Toulouse was in his mantle, and saluted the company with a grave and meditative manner, neither accosting nor accosted. M. le Duc d'Orléans found himself in front of him and turned towards me, although at some distance, as though to testify his trouble. I bent my head a little while looking fixedly at him, as though to say, "Well, what then?"

A short time afterwards the Comte de Toulouse had a conversation with his brother, both speaking with agitation and without appearing to agree very well. Then the Count approached M. le Duc d'Orléans, who was talking again to M. le Duc, and they spoke at some length to each other. As their faces were towards the wall, nothing but their backs could be seen, no emotion and scarcely a gesture was visible.

The Duc du Maine had remained where he had

spoken to his brother. He seemed half dead, looked askance upon the company with wandering eyes, and the troubled agitated manner of a criminal, or a man condemned to death. Shortly afterwards he became pale as a corpse, and appeared to me to have been taken ill. He crawled to the end of the table, during which the Comte de Toulouse came and said a word to the Regent, and began to walk out of the room.

All these movements took place in a trice. The Regent, who was near the King's armchair, said aloud, "Now, gentlemen, let us take our places." Each approached to do so, and as I looked behind mine I saw the two brothers at the door as though about to leave the room. I leaped, so to speak, between the King's armchair and M. le Duc d'Orléans, and whispered in the Regent's ear so as not to be heard by the Prince de Conti:

"Monsieur, look at them. They are going."

"I know it," he replied tranquilly.

"Yes," I exclaimed with animation, "but do you know what they will do when they are outside?"

"Nothing at all," said he: "the Comte de Toulouse has asked me for permission to go out with his brother; he has assured me that they will be discreet."

"And if they are not?" I asked.

"They will be. But if they are not, they will be well looked after."

"But if they commit some absurdity, or leave Paris?"

"They will be arrested. Orders have been given, and I will answer for their execution."

Therefore, more tranquil, I sat down in my place. Scarcely had I got there than the Regent called me back, and said that since they had left the room, he should like to tell the Council what was going to be done with respect to them. I replied that the only ob-

jection to this, their presence, being now removed—I thought it would be wrong not to do so. He asked M. le Duc in a whisper, across the table,—afterwards called to the Keeper of the Seals; both agreed, and then we really seated ourselves.

These movements had augmented the trouble and curiosity of every one. The eyes of all, occupied with the Regent, had been removed from the door, so that the absence of the bastards was by no means generally remarked. As soon as it was perceived, everybody looked inquiringly around, and remained standing in expectation. I sat down in the seat of the Comte de Toulouse. The Duc de Guiche, who sat on the other side of me, left a seat between us, and still waited for the bastards. He told me to approach nearer to him, saying I had mistaken my place. I replied not a word, looking on at the company, which was a sight to see. At the second or third summons, I replied that he, on the contrary, must approach me.

"And M. le Comte de Toulouse?" replied he.

"Approach," said I, and seeing him motionless with astonishment, looking towards the Duc du Maine's seat, which had been taken by the Keeper of the Seals, I pulled him by his coat (I was seated), saying to him, "Come here and sit down."

I pulled him so hard that he seated himself near me without understanding aught.

"But what is the meaning of all this?" he demanded; "where are these gentlemen?"

"I don't know," replied I, impatiently; "but they are not here."

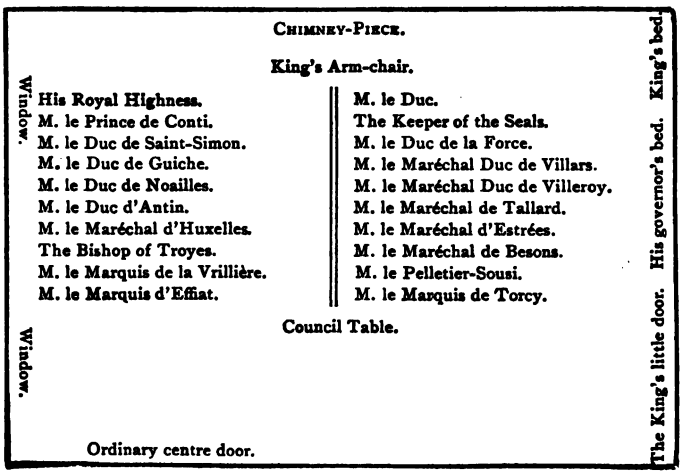
At the same time, the Duc de Noailles, who sat next to the Duc de Guiche, and who, enraged at counting for nothing in preparations for such a great day, had apparently divined that I was in the plot, vanquished

by his curiosity, stretched over the table in front of the Duc de Guiche, and said to me:

"In the name of Heaven, M. le Duc, do me the favour to say what all this means?"

I was at daggers-drawn with him, as I have explained, and had no mercy for him. I turned, therefore, towards him with a cold and disdainful air, and, after having heard him out, and looked at him, I turned away again. That was all my reply. The Duc de Guiche pressed me to say something, even if it was only that I knew all. I denied it, and yet each seated himself slowly, because intent only upon looking around, and divining what all this could mean, and because it was a long time before any one could comprehend that we must proceed to business without the bastards, although nobody opened his mouth.

Before relating what took place at this Council, I will explain the arrangement of the chamber in which it was held, so that what has just been explained, and what is going to be, may appear clearer.



When everybody was in his place M. le Duc d'Orléans after having for a moment looked all around, every eye fixed upon him, said that he had assembled this Regency Council to hear read the resolutions adopted at the last; that he had come to the conclusion that there was no other means of obtaining the registration of the finance edict recently passed than that of holding a Bed of Justice; that the heat rendering it unadvisable to jeopardise the King's health in the midst of the crowd of the Palais de Justice, he had thought it best to follow the example of the late King, who had sometimes sent for the Parliament to the Tuileries; that, as it had become necessary to hold this Bed of Justice, he had thought it right to profit by the occasion, and register the *lettres de provision* of the Keeper of the Seals at the commencement of the sitting; and he ordered the Keeper of the Seals to read them.

During this reading, which had no other importance than to seize an occasion of forcing the Parliament to recognize the Keeper of the Seals, whose person and whose commission they hated, I occupied myself in examining the faces.

I saw M. le Duc d'Orléans with an air of authority and of attention, so new that I was struck with it. M. le Duc, gay and brilliant, appeared quite at his ease, and confident. The Prince de Conti, astonished, absent, meditative, seemed to see nothing and to take part in nothing. The Keeper of the Seals, grave and pensive, appeared to have too many things in his head; nevertheless, with bag, wax, and seals near him, he looked very decided and very firm. The Duc de la Force hung his head, but examined on the sly the faces of us all. Maréchal Villeroy and Maréchal de Villars spoke to each other now and then; both had irritated eyes and long faces. Nobody was more composed than

the Maréchal de Tallard; but he could not hide an internal agitation which often peeped out. The Maréchal d'Estrées had a stupefied air, as though he saw nothing but a mist before him. The Maréchal de Besons, enveloped more than ordinarily in his big wig, appeared deeply meditative, his look cast down and angry. Pelletier, very buoyant, simple, curious, looking at everything. Torcy, three times more starched than usual, seemed to look at everything by stealth. Effiat, meddlesome, piqued, outraged, ready to boil over, fuming at everybody, his look haggard, as it passed precipitously, and by fits and starts, from side to side. Those on my side I could not well examine; I saw them only by moments as they changed their postures or I mine; and then not well or for long. I have already spoken of the astonishment of the Duc de Guiche, and of the vexation and curiosity of the Duc de Noailles. D'Antin, usually of such easy carriage, appeared to me as though in fetters, and quite scared. The Maréchal d'Huxelles tried to put a good face on the matter, but could not hide the despair which pierced him. Old Troyes, all abroad, showed nothing but surprise and embarrassment, and did not appear to know where he was.

From the first moment of this reading and the departure of the bastards, everybody saw that something was in preparation against them. What that something was to be, kept every mind in suspense. A Bed of Justice, too, prepared in secret, ready as soon as announced, indicated a strong resolution taken against the Parliament, and indicated also so much firmness and measure in a Prince, usually supposed to be entirely incapable of any, that every one was at sea. All, according as they were allied to the Parliament or to the bastards, seemed to wait in fear what was to be proposed. Many others appeared deeply wounded be-

cause the Regent had not admitted them behind the scenes, and because they were compelled to share the common surprise. Never were faces so universally elongated; never was embarrassment more general or more marked. In these first moments of trouble I fancy few people lent an ear to the letters the Keeper of the Seals was reading. When they were finished, M. le Duc d'Orléans said he did not think it was worth while to take the votes one by one, either upon the contents of these letters or their registration; but that all would be in favour of commencing the Bed of Justice at once.

After a short but marked pause, the Regent developed, in few words, the reasons which had induced the Council at its last sitting, to abrogate the decree of the Parliament. He added, that judging by the conduct of that assembly, it would have been to jeopardise anew the King's authority, to send for registration this act of abrogation to the Parliament, which would assuredly have given in public a proof of formal disobedience, in refusing to register; that there being no other remedy than a Bed of Justice, he had thought it best to assemble one, but in secret, so as not to give time or opportunity to the ill-disposed to prepare for disobedience; that he believed, with the Keeper of the Seals, the frequency and the manner of the parliamentary remonstrances were such that the Parliament must be made to keep within the limits of its duty, which, long since, it seemed to have lost sight of; that the Keeper of the Seals would now read to the Council the act of abrogation, and the rules that were to be observed in future. Then, looking at the Keeper of the Seals, "Monsieur," said he, "you will explain this better than I. Have the goodness to do so before reading the decree."

The Keeper of the Seals then spoke, and paraphrased

what his Royal Highness had said more briefly; he explained in what manner the Parliament had the right to remonstrate, showed the distinction between its power and that of the Crown; the incompetence of the tribunals in all matters of state and finance; and the necessity of repressing the remonstrances of Parliament by passing a code (that was the term used), which was to serve as their inviolable guide. All this explained without lengthiness, with grace and clearness, he began to read the decree, as it has since been printed and circulated everywhere, some trifling alteration excepted.

The reading finished, the Regent, contrary to his custom, showed his opinion by the praises he gave to this document: and then, assuming the Regent's tone and air he had never before put on, and which completed the astonishment of the company, he added, "To-day, gentlemen, I shall deviate from the usual rule in taking your votes, and I think it will be well to do so during all this Council."

Then after a slight glance upon both sides of the table, during which you might have heard a worm crawl, he turned towards M. le Duc and asked him his opinion. M. le Duc declared for the decree, alleging several short but strong reasons. The Prince de Conti spoke in the same sense. I spoke after, for the Keeper of the Seals had done so directly his reading was finished. My opinion was given in more general terms so as not to fall too heavily upon the Parliament, or to show that I arrogated to myself the right to support his Royal Highness in the same manner as a prince of the blood. The Duc de la Force was longer. All spoke, but the majority said but little, and some allowed their vexation to be seen, but did not dare to oppose, feeling that it would be of no use. Dejection was painted upon their faces; it was evident this affair

of the Parliament was not what they expected or wished. Tallard was the only one whose face did not betray him; but the suffocated monosyllable of the Maréchal d'Huxelles tore off the rest of the mask. The Duc de Noailles could scarcely contain himself, and spoke more than he wished, with anguish worthy of Fresnes. M. le Duc d'Orléans spoke last, and with unusual force; then made a pause, piercing all the company with his eyes.

At this moment the Maréchal de Villeroy, full of his own thoughts, muttered between his teeth, "But will the Parliament come?" This was gently taken up. M. le Duc d'Orléans replied that he did not doubt it; and immediately afterwards, that it would be as well to know when they set out. The Keeper of the Seals said he should be informed. M. le Duc d'Orléans replied that the door-keepers must be told. Thereupon up jumps M. de Troyes.

I was seized with such a sudden fear lest he should go and chatter at the door with some one that I jumped up also, and got the start of him. As I returned, D'Antin, who had turned round to lay wait for me, begged me for mercy's sake to tell him what all this meant. I sped on saying that I knew nothing. "Tell that to others! Ho, ho!" replied he. When he had resumed his seat, M. le Duc d'Orléans said something, I don't know what, M. de Troyes still standing, I also. In passing La Vrillière, I asked him to go to the door every time anything was wanted, for fear of the babbling of M. de Troyes; adding, that distant as I was from the door, going there looked too peculiar. La Vrillière did as I begged him all the rest of the sitting.

As I was returning to my place, D'Antin, still in ambush, begged me in the name of heaven, his hands joined, to tell him something. I kept firm, however,

saying, "You will see." The Duc de Guiche pressed me as resolutely, even saying, it was evident I was in the plot. I remained deaf.

These little movements over, M. le Duc d'Orléans, rising a little in his seat, said to the company, in a tone more firm, and more like that of a master than before, that there was another matter now to attend to, much more important than the one just heard. This prelude increased the general astonishment, and rendered everybody motionless. After a moment of silence the Regent said, that the peers had had for some time good grounds of complaint against certain persons, who by unaccustomed favour, had been allowed to assume rank and dignity to which their birth did not entitle them; that it was time this irregularity should be stopped short, and that with this view, an instrument had been drawn up, which the Keeper of the Seals would read to them.

A profound silence followed this discourse, so unexpected, and which began to explain the absence of the bastards. Upon many visages a sombre hue was painted. As for me I had enough to do to compose my own visage, upon which all eyes successively passed; I had put upon it an extra coat of gravity and of modesty; I steered my eyes with care, and only looked horizontally at most, not an inch higher. As soon as the Regent opened his mouth on this business, M. le Duc cast upon me a triumphant look which almost routed my seriousness, and which warned me to increase it, and no longer expose myself to meet his glance. Contained in this manner, attentive in devouring the aspect of all, alive to everything and to myself, motionless, glued to my chair, all my body fixed, penetrated with the most acute and most sensible pleasure that joy could impart, with the most charming anxiety, with an enjoyment, so perseveringly and so immoder-

ately hoped for, I sweated with agony at the captivity of my transport, and this agony was of a voluptuousness such as I had never felt before,—such as I have never felt since. How inferior are the pleasures of the senses to those of the mind!—and how true it is that the balance-weight of misfortunes, is the good fortune that finishes them!

A moment after the Regent had ceased speaking, he told the Keeper of the Seals to read the declaration. During the reading, which was more than music to my ears, my attention was again fixed on the company. I saw by the alteration of the faces what an immense effect this document, which embodied the resolutions I have already explained, produced upon some of our friends. The whole of the reading was listened to with the utmost attention, and the utmost emotion.

When it was finished, M. le Duc d'Orléans said he was very sorry for this necessity, but that justice must be done to the peers as well as to the princes of the blood: then turning to the Keeper of the Seals asked him for his opinion.

This latter spake briefly and well; but was like a dog running over hot ashes. He declared for the declaration. His Royal Highness then called upon M. le Duc for his opinion. It was short, but nervous, and polite to the peers. M. le Prince de Conti the same. Then the Regent asked me my opinion. I made, contrary to my custom, a profound inclination, but without rising, and said, that having the honour to find myself the eldest of the peers of the Council, I offered to his Royal Highness my very humble thanks and those of all the peers of France, for the justice so ardently desired,—and touching so closely our dignity and our persons,—that he had resolved to render us; that I begged him to be persuaded of our gratitude, and to count upon our utmost attachment to his person

for an act of equity so longed for, and so complete; that in this sincere expression of our sentiments consisted all our opinion, because, being pleaders, we could not be judges also. I terminated these few words with a profound inclination, without rising, imitated by the Duc de la Force at the same moment; all the rest of the Council briefly gave their opinions, approving what the majority of them evidently did not approve at all.

I had tried to modulate my voice, so that it should be just heard and no more, preferring to be indistinct rather than speak too loudly; and confined all my person to express as much as possible, gravity, modesty, and simple gratitude. M. le Duc maliciously made signs to me in smiling, that I had spoken well. But I kept my seriousness, and turned round to examine all the rest.

It would be impossible to describe the aspect of the company. Nothing was seen but people, oppressed with surprise that overwhelmed them, meditative, agitated, some irritated, some but ill at ease, like La Force and Guiche, who freely admitted so to me.

The opinions taken almost as soon as demanded, M. le Duc d'Orléans said, " Gentlemen, it is finished, then: justice is done, and the rights of Messieurs the Peers are in safety. I have now an act of grace to propose to you, and I do so with all the more confidence, because I have taken care to consult the parties interested, who support me; and because, I have drawn up the document in a manner to wound no one. What I am going to explain to you, regards the Comte de Toulouse alone.

" Nobody is ignorant how he has disapproved all that has been done in favour of him and his brother, and that he has sustained it since the regency only out of respect for the wishes of the late King. Everybody

knows also his virtue, his merit, his application, his probity, his disinterestedness. Nevertheless, I could not avoid including him in the declaration you have just heard. Justice furnishes no exception in his favour, and the rights of the Peers must be assured. Now that they are no longer attacked, I have thought fitly to render to merit what from equity I have taken from birth; and to make an exception of M. le Comte de Toulouse, which (while confirming the rule), will leave him in full possession of all the honours he enjoys to the exclusion of every other. Those honours are not to pass to his children, should he marry and have any, or their restitution be considered as a precedent to be made use of at any future time.

"I have the pleasure to announce that the Princes of the Blood consent to this, and that such of the Peers to whom I have been able to explain myself, share my sentiments. I doubt not that the esteem he has acquired here will render this proposition agreeable to you." And then turning to the Keeper of the Seals, "Monsieur, will you read the declaration?"

It was read at once.

I had, during the discourse of his Royal Highness, thrown all my attention into an examination of the impression it made upon the assembly. The astonishment it caused was general; it was such, that to judge of those addressed, it seemed that they understood nothing; and they did not recover themselves during all the reading. I inwardly rejoiced at success so pleasingly demonstrated and did not receive too well the Duc de Guiche, who testified to me his disapprobation. Villeroy confounded, Villars raging, Effiat rolling his eyes, Estrées beside himself with surprise, were the most marked. Tallard, with his head stretched forward, sucked in, so to speak, all the Regent's words as they were proffered, and those of the

declaration, as the Keeper of the Seals read them. Noailles, inwardly distracted, could not hide his distraction; Huxelles, entirely occupied in smoothing himself, forgot to frown. I divided my attention between the declaration and these persons.

The document read, M. le Duc d'Orléans praised it in two words, and called upon the Keeper of the Seals to give his opinion. He did so briefly, in favour of the Comte de Toulouse. M. le Duc the same; M. le Prince de Conti the same. After him, I testified to his Royal Highness my joy at seeing him conciliate the justice and the safety of the peers with the unheard-of favour he had just rendered to the virtue of M. le Comte de Toulouse, who merited it by his moderation, his truthfulness, his attachment to the State; thus the more he had recognised the injustice of his elevation to the rank to which he was raised, the more he had rendered himself worthy of it, and the more it was advantageous to the peers to yield to merit, (when this exception was confined solely to his person, with formal and legal precautions, so abundantly supplied by the declaration) and voluntarily contribute thus to an elevation without example, (so much the more flattering because its only foundation was virtue), so as to incite that virtue more and more to the service and utility of the state; that I declared therefore with joy for the declaration, and did not fear to add the very humble thanks of the peers, since I had the honour to be the oldest present.

As I closed my mouth I cast my eyes in front of some, and plainly saw that my applause did not please, and, perhaps, my thanks still less. The others gave their opinion with heavy heart, as it were, to so terrible a blow, some few muttered I know not what between their teeth, but the thunderbolt upon the Duc du Maine's cabal was more and more felt, and as re-

flection succeeded to the first feeling of surprise, so a bitter and sharp grief manifested itself upon their faces in so marked a manner, that it was easy to see it had become high time to strike.

All opinions having been expressed, M. le Duc cast a brilliant leer at me, and prepared to speak; but the Keeper of the Seals, who, from his side of the table did not see this movement, wishing also to say something, M. le Duc d'Orléans intimated to him that M. le Duc had the start of him. Raising himself majestically from his seat, the Regent then said: "Gentlemen, M. le Duc has a proposition to make to you. I have found it just and reasonable; I doubt not, you will find it so too." Then turning towards M. le Duc, he added, "Monsieur, will you explain it?"

The movement these few words made among the company is inexpressible. 'Twas as though I saw before me people deprived of all power, and surprised by a new assembly rising up from the midst of them in an asylum they had breathlessly reached.

"Monsieur," said M. le Duc, addressing himself to the Regent, as usual; "since you have rendered justice to the Dukes, I think I am justified in asking for it myself. The deceased King gave the education of his Majesty to M. le Duc du Maine. I was a minor then, and according to the idea of the deceased King, M. du Maine was prince of the blood, capable of succeeding to the crown. Now I am of age, and not only M. du Maine is no longer prince of the blood, but he is reduced to the rank of his peerage. M. le Maréchal de Villeroy is now his senior, and precedes him everywhere; M. le Maréchal can therefore no longer remain governor of the King, under the superintendence of M. du Maine. I ask you, then, for M. du Maine's post, that I think my age, my rank, my attachment to the King and the State, qualify me for. I hope," he

added, turning towards his left, "that I shall profit by the lessons of M. le Maréchal de Villeroy, acquit myself of my duties with distinction, and merit his friendship."

At this discourse the Maréchal de Villeroy almost slipped off his chair. As soon, at least, as he heard the words, "Superintendence of the King's education," he rested his forehead upon his stick, and remained several moments in that posture. He appeared even to understand nothing of the rest of the speech. Villars and D'Effiat bent their backs like people who had received the last blow. I could see nobody on my own side except the Duc de Guiche, who approved through all his prodigious astonishment. Estrées became master of himself the first, shook himself, brightened up, and looked at the company like a man who returns from the other world.

As soon as M. le Duc had finished, M. le Duc d'Orléans reviewed all the company with his eyes, and then said, that the request of M. le Duc was just; that he did not think it could be refused; that M. le Maréchal de Villeroy could not be allowed to remain under a person whom he preceded in rank; that the superintendence of the King's education could not be more worthily filled than by M. le Duc; and that he was persuaded all would be of one voice in this matter. Immediately afterwards, he asked M. le Prince de Conti to give his opinion, who did so in two words; then he asked the Keeper of the Seals, whose reply was equally brief; then he asked me.

I simply said, looking at M. le Duc, that I was for the change with all my heart. The rest, M. de la Force excepted (who said a single word), voted without speaking, simply bowing; the Marshals and D'Effiat scarcely moved their eyes, and those of Villars glistened with fury.

The opinions taken, the Regent turning towards M. le Duc, said, " Monsieur, I think you would like to read what you intend to say to the King at the Bed of Justice."

Therefore M. le Duc read it as it has been printed. Some moments of sad and profound silence succeeded this reading, during which the Maréchal de Villeroy, pale and agitated, muttered to himself. At last, like a man who has made up his mind, he turned with bended head, expiring eyes, and feeble voice, towards the Regent, and said, " I will simply say these two words; here are all the dispositions of the late king overturned, I cannot see it without grief. M. du Maine is very unfortunate."

" Monsieur," replied the Regent, in a loud and animated tone, " M. du Maine is my brother-in-law, but I prefer an open enemy to a hidden one."

At this great declaration several lowered their heads. The Maréchal de Villeroy nearly swooned; sighs began to make themselves heard near me, as though by stealth; everybody felt by this that the scabbard was thrown away.

The Keeper of the Seals, to make a diversion, proposed to read the speech he had prepared to serve as preface to the decree to be read at the Bed of Justice, abrogating the Parliament decrees; as he was finishing it, some one entered to say he was asked for at the door.

He went out, returning immediately afterwards, not to his place, but to M. le Duc d'Orléans, whom he took into a window, meditative silence reigning around. The Regent having returned back to his place, said to the company, he had received information that the Chief-President of the Parliament, notwithstanding the reply previously made, had proposed that the Parliament should not go to the Tuileries, asking, " What it

was to do in a place where it would not be free?" that he had proposed to send a message to the King, stating that "his Parliament would hear his wishes in their ordinary place of meeting, whenever it should please him to come or to send." The Regent added that these propositions had made considerable sensation, and that the Parliament were at that moment debating upon them. The Council appeared much astounded at this news, but M. le Duc d'Orléans said, in a very composed manner, that he did not expect a refusal; he ordered the Keeper of the Seals, nevertheless, to propose such measures as it would be best to take, supposing the motion of the Chief-President should be carried.

The Keeper of the Seals declared that he could not believe the Parliament would be guilty of this disobedience, contrary to all law and usage. He showed at some length that nothing was so pernicious as to expose the King's authority to a formal opposition, and decided in favour of the immediate interdiction of the Parliament if it fell into this fault. M. le Duc d'Orléans added that there was no other course open, and took the opinion of M. le Duc, which was strongly in his favour. M. le Prince de Conti the same, mine also, that of M. de la Force and of M. de Guiche still more so. The Maréchal de Villeroy, in a broken voice, seeking big words, which would not come in time to him, deplored this extremity, and did all he could to avoid giving a precise opinion. Forced at last by the Regent to explain himself, he did not dare to oppose, but added that he assented with regret, and wished to explain the grievous results of the proposed measure. But the Regent, interrupting him, said he need not take the trouble: everything had been foreseen; that it would be much more grievous to be disobeyed by the Parliament than to force it into obedience; and

immediately after asked the Duc de Noailles his opinion, who replied that it would be very sad to act thus, but that he was for it. Villars wished to paraphrase, but contained himself, and said he hoped the Parliament would obey. Pressed by the Regent, he proposed to wait for fresh news before deciding; but, pressed more closely, he declared for the interdiction, with an air of warmth and vexation, extremely marked. Nobody after this dared to hesitate, and the majority voted by an inclination of the head.

A short time afterwards it was announced to M. le Duc d'Orléans that the Parliament had set out on foot, and had begun to defile through the palace. This news much cooled the blood of the company, M. le Duc d'Orléans more than that of any one else.

After this the Regent, in a cheerful manner, called upon the Presidents of the Councils to bring forward any business they might have on hand, but not one had any. The Maréchal de Villars said, however, that he had a matter to produce, and he produced it accordingly, but with a clearness which, under the circumstances, was extraordinary. I fancy, however, that very few knew what he was talking about. We were all too much occupied with more interesting matters, and each voted without speaking. Bad luck to those who had had business to bring forward this day; they who conducted it would have known but little what they said: they who listened, still less.

The Council finished thus, from lack of matter, and a movement was made to adjourn it as usual. I stepped in front of M. le Prince de Conti to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who understood me, and who begged the company to keep their seats. La Vrillière went out by order for news, but there was nothing fresh.

CHAPTER XCIII

IT was now a little after ten. We remained a good half-hour in our places, talking a little with each other, but on the whole rather silent. At the end some grew fidgety and anxious, rose and went to the windows. M. le Duc d'Orléans restrained them as well as he could; but at length Desgranges entered to say that the Chief-President had already arrived, in his coach, and that the Parliament was near. So soon as he had retired, the Council rose by groups, and could no longer be kept seated. M. le Duc d'Orléans himself at last rose, and all he could do was to prohibit everybody from leaving the room under any pretext, and this prohibition he repeated two or three times.

Scarcely had we risen when M. le Duc came to me, rejoiced at the success that had hitherto been had, and much relieved by the absence of the bastards. Soon after I quitted him the Duc d'Orléans came to me, overpowered with the same sentiment. I said what I thought of the consternation of every one; and painted the expression of M. d'Effiat, at which he was not surprised. He was more so about Besons. I asked if he was not afraid the bastards would come to the Bed of Justice; but he was certain they would not. I was resolved, however, to prepare his mind against that contingency.

I walked about, slowly and incessantly without fixing myself on any one, in order that nothing should escape me, principally attending to the doors. I took advantage of the opportunity to say a word here and a word

there, to pass continually near those who were suspected, to skim and interrupt all conversations. D'Antin was often joined by the Duc de Noailles, who had resumed his habit of the morning, and continually followed me with his eyes. He had an air of consternation, was agitated and embarrassed in countenance—he commonly so free and easy! D'Antin took me aside to see whether he could not, considering his position, be excused from attending the Bed of Justice. He received permission from the Regent on certain conditions.

I went then to break in upon the colloquy of D'Effiat and his friends, and taking them by surprise, caused D'Effiat to say that he had just heard strange resolutions, that he did not know who had advised them, that he prayed that M. d'Orléans would find them advantageous. I replied, agreeing with him. The Maréchal de Villeroy sighed, muttered, and shook his wig, Villars spoke more at length, and blamed sharply what had been done. I assented to everything, being there not to persuade but to watch.

Nevertheless we grew weary of the slowness of the Parliament, and often sent out for news. Several of the Council tried to leave the room, perhaps to blab, but the Regent would allow no one but La Vrillière to go out, and seeing that the desire to leave increased, stood at the door himself. I suggested to him that Madame d'Orléans would be in a great state of uneasiness, and suggested that he should write to her; but he could not be persuaded to do it, though he promised.

At last the Parliament arrived, and behold us! like children, all at the windows. The members came in red robes, two by two, by the grand door of the court, which they passed in order to reach the Hall of the Ambassadors, where the Chief-President, who had

come in his carriage with the president Haligre, awaited them.

The Parliament being in its place, the peers having arrived, and the presidents having put on their furs behind the screens arranged for that purpose in an adjoining room, a messenger came to inform us that all was ready. The question had been agitated, whether the King should dine meanwhile, and I had it carried in the negative, fearing lest coming immediately after to the Bed of Justice, and having eaten before his usual hour, he might be ill, which would have been a grievous inconvenience. As soon as it was announced to the Regent that we could set out, his Royal Highness sent word to the Parliament, to prepare the deputation to receive the King; and then said aloud to the company, that it was time to go in search of his Majesty.

At these words I felt a storm of joy sweep over me, at the thought of the grand spectacle that was going to pass in my presence, which warned me to be doubly on my guard. I tried to furnish myself with the strongest dose of seriousness, gravity, and modesty. I followed M. le Duc d'Orléans, who entered the King's room by the little door, and who found the King in his cabinet. On the way the Duc d'Albret made me some very marked compliments, with evident desire to discover something. I put him off with politeness, complaints of the crowd, of the annoyance of my dress, and gained thus the King's cabinet.

The King was dressed as usual. When the Duc d'Orléans had been a few moments with him, he asked him if he would be pleased to go: and the way was instantly cleared, a procession formed, and the King moved towards the Hall of the Swiss Guard.

I now hastened to the chamber, where the Bed of Justice was to be held. The passage to it was tolerably free. The officers of the body-guard made place

for me and for the Duc de la Force, and Maréchal de Villars, who followed me, one by one. I stopped a moment in the passage at the entrance to the room, seized with joy upon seeing this grand spectacle, and at the thought of the grand movement that was drawing nigh, I needed a pause in order to recover myself sufficiently to see distinctly what I looked at, and to put on a new coat of seriousness and of modesty. I fully expected I should be well examined by a company which had been carefully taught not to like me, and by the curious spectators waiting to see what was to be hatched out of so profound a secret, in such an important assembly, summoned so hastily. Moreover, nobody was ignorant that I knew all, at least from the Council of the Regency I had just left.

I did not deceive myself. As soon as I appeared, all eyes were fixed upon me. I slowly advanced towards the chief *greffier,* and introducing myself between the two seats, I traversed the length of the room, in front of the King's people, who saluted me with a smiling air, and I ascended over three rows of high seats, where all the peers were in their places, and who rose as I approached the steps. I respectfully saluted them from the third row.

Seated in my elevated place, and with nothing before me, I was able to glance over the whole assembly. I did so at once, piercing everybody with my eyes. One thing alone restrained me; it was that I did not dare to fix my eyes upon certain objects. I feared the fire and brilliant significance of my looks at that moment so appreciated by everybody: and the more I saw I attracted attention, the more anxious was I to wean curiosity by my discreetness. I cast, nevertheless, a glittering glance upon the Chief-President and his friends, for the examination of whom I was admirably placed. I carried my looks over all the Parliament,

and saw there an astonishment, a silence, a consternation, such as I had not expected, and which was of good augury to me. The Chief-President, insolently crest-fallen, the other presidents disconcerted, and attentive to all, furnished me the most agreeable spectacle. The simply curious (among which I rank those who had no vote) appeared to me not less surprised (but without the bewilderment of the others), calmly surprised; in a word, everybody showed much expectation and desire to divine what had passed at the Council.

I had but little leisure for this examination, for the King immediately arrived. The hubbub which followed his entrance, and which lasted until his Majesty and all who accompanied him were in their places, was another singularity. Everybody sought to penetrate the Regent, the Keeper of the Seals, and the principal personages. The departure of the bastards from the cabinet of the Council had redoubled attention, but everybody did not know of that departure; now everybody perceived their absence. The consternation of the Maréchals—of their senior—(the governor of the King) was evident. It augmented the dejection of the Chief-President, who not seeing his master the Duc du Maine, cast a terrible glance upon M. de Sully and me, who exactly occupied the places of the two brothers. In an instant all the eyes of the assembly were cast, at the same time, upon us; and I remarked that the meditativeness and expectation increased in every face. That of the Regent had an air of gentle but resolute majesty completely new to it, his eyes attentive, his deportment grave, but easy. M. le Duc, sage, measured, but encircled by I know not what brilliancy, which adorned all his person and which was evidently kept down. M. le Prince de Conti appeared dull, pensive, his mind far away perhaps. I was not able during the sitting to see them except now and then, and under

pretext of looking at the King, who was serious, majestic, and at the same time as pretty as can be imagined; grave, with grace in all his bearing, his air attentive, and not at all wearied, playing his part very well and without embarrassment.

When all was ready, Argenson, the Keeper of the Seals, remained some minutes at his desk motionless, looking down, and the fire which sprang from his eyes seemed to burn every breast. An extreme silence eloquently announced the fear, the attention, the trouble, and the curiosity of all the expectants. The Parliament, which under the deceased King had often summoned this same Argenson, and as lieutenant of police had often given him its orders, he standing uncovered at the bar of the house;—the Parliament, which since the regency had displayed its ill-will towards him so far as to excite public remark, and which still detained prisoners and papers to vex him; this Chief-President so superior to him, so haughty, so proud of his Duc du Maine; this Lamoignon, who had boasted he would have him hanged at his Chamber of Justice, where he had so completely dishonoured himself;—this Parliament and all saw him clad in the ornaments of the chief office of the robe, presiding over them, effacing them, and entering upon his functions to teach them their duty, to read them a public lesson the first time he found himself at their head! These vain presidents were seen turning their looks from a man who imposed so strongly upon their pride, and who annihilated their arrogance in the place even whence they drew it, and rendered them stupid by regards they could not sustain.

After the Keeper of the Seals (according to the manner of the preachers) had accustomed himself to this august audience, he uncovered himself, rose, mounted to the King, knelt before the steps of the throne, by

the side of the middle of the steps, where the grand chamberlain was lying upon cushions, and took the King's orders, descended, placed himself in his chair and covered himself. Let us say it once for all, he performed the same ceremony at the commencement of each business, and likewise before and after taking the opinion upon each; at the bar of Justice neither he nor the chamberlain ever speaks otherwise to the King; and every time he went to the King on this occasion the Regent rose and approached him to hear and suggest the orders. Having returned back into his place, he opened, after some moments of silence, this great scene by a discourse. The report of the Bed of Justice, made by the Parliament and printed, which is in the hands of everybody, renders it unnecessary for me to give the discourse of the Keeper of the Seals, that of the Chief-President, those of the King's people, and the different papers that were read and registered. I will simply content myself with some observations. This first discourse, the reading of the letters of the Keeper of the Seals, and the speech of the Advocate-General Blancmesnil which followed, the opinions taken, the order given, sometimes reiterated to keep the two double doors open, did not surprise anybody; served only as the preface to all the rest; to sharpen curiosity more and more as the moment approached in which it was to be satisfied.

This first act finished, the second was announced by the discourse of the Keeper of the Seals, the force of which penetrated all the Parliament. General consternation spread itself over their faces. Scarcely one of the members dared to speak to his neighbour. I remarked that the Abbé Pucelle, who, although only counsellor-clerk, was upon the forms in front of me, stood, so that he might hear better every time the Keeper of the Seals spoke. Bitter grief, obviously

full of vexation, obscured the visage of the Chief-President. Shame and confusion were painted there.

After the vote, and when the Keeper of the Seals had pronounced, I saw the principal members of the Parliament in commotion. The Chief-President was about to speak. He did so by uttering the remonstrance of the Parliament, full of the most subtle and impudent malice against the Regent, and of insolence against the King. The villain trembled, nevertheless, in pronouncing it. His voice broken, his eyes constrained, his flurry and confusion, contradicted the venomous words he uttered; libations he could not abstain from offering to himself and his company. This was the moment when I relished, with delight utterly impossible to express, the sight of these haughty lawyers (who had dared to refuse us the salutation), prostrated upon their knees, and rendering, at our feet, homage to the throne, whilst we sat covered upon elevated seats, at the side of that same throne. These situations and these postures, so widely disproportioned, plead of themselves with all the force of evidence, the cause of those who are really and truly *laterales regis* against this *vas electum* of the third estate. My eyes fixed, glued, upon these haughty bourgeois, with their uncovered heads humiliated to the level of our feet, traversed the chief members kneeling or standing, and the ample folds of those fur robes of rabbit-skin that would imitate ermine, which waved at each long and redoubled genuflexion; genuflexions which only finished by command of the King.

The remonstrance being finished, the Keeper of the Seals mentioned to the King their wishes, asking further opinions; took his place again; cast his eyes on the Chief-President, and said: *The King wishes to be obeyed, and obeyed immediately.*

This grand speech was a thunder-bolt which overturned councillors and presidents in the most marked manner. All of them lowered their heads, and the majority kept them lowered for a long time. The rest of the spectators, except the marshals of France, appeared little affected by this desolation.

But this—an ordinary triumph—was nothing to that which was to follow. After an interval of some few minutes, the Keeper of the Seals went up again to the King, returned to his place, and remained there in silence some little time. Then everybody clearly saw that the Parliamentary affair being finished, something else must be in the wind. Some thought that a dispute which the Dukes had had with the Parliament, concerning one of its usurpations, was now to be settled in our favour. Others who had noticed the absence of the bastards, guessed it was something that affected them; but nobody divined what, much less its extent.

At last the Keeper of the Seals opened his mouth, and in his first sentence announced the fall of one brother and the preservation of the other. The effect of this upon every one was inexpressible. However occupied I might be in containing mine, I lost nothing. Astonishment prevailed over every other sentiment. Many appeared glad, either from hatred to the Duc du Maine, or from affection for the Comte de Toulouse; several were in consternation. The Chief-President lost all countenance; his visage, so self-sufficient and so audacious, was seized with a convulsive movement; the excess alone of his rage kept him from swooning. It was even worse at the reading of the declaration. Each word was legislative and decreed a fresh fall. The attention was general; every one was motionless, so as not to lose a word; all eyes were fixed upon the *greffier* who was reading. A third of this reading over, the

Chief-President, gnashing the few teeth left in his head, rested his forehead upon his stick that he held in both hands, and in this singular and marked position finished listening to the declaration, so overwhelming for him, so resurrectionary for us.

Yet, as for me, I was dying with joy. I was so oppressed that I feared I should swoon; my heart dilated to excess, and no longer found room to beat. The violence I did myself, in order to let nothing escape me, was infinite; and, nevertheless, this torment was delicious. I compared the years and the time of servitude; the grievous days, when dragged at the tail of the Parliamentary car as a victim, I had served as a triumph for the bastards; the various steps by which they had mounted to the summit above our heads; I compared them, I say, to this court of justice and of rule, to this frightful fall which, at the same time, raised us by the force of the shock. I thanked myself that it was through me this had been brought about. I had triumphed, I was revenged; I swam in my vengeance; I enjoyed the full accomplishment of desires the most vehement and the most continuous of all my life. I was tempted to fling away all thought and care. Nevertheless, I did not fail to listen to this vivifying reading (every note of which sounded upon my heart as the bow upon an instrument), or to examine, at the same time, the impressions it made upon every one.

At the first word the Keeper of the Seals said of this affair, the eyes of the two bishop-peers met mine. Never did I see surprise equal to theirs, or so marked a transport of joy. I had not been able to speak to them on account of the distance of our places; and they could not resist the movement which suddenly seized them. I swallowed through my eyes a delicious draught of their joy, and turned away my glance from

theirs, lest I should succumb beneath this increase of delight. I no longer dared to look at them.

The reading finished, the other declaration in favour of the Comte de Toulouse was immediately commenced by the *greffier,* according to the command of the Keeper of the Seals, who had given them to him both together. It seemed to complete the confusion of the Chief-President and the friends of the Duc du Maine, by the contrast between the treatment of the two brothers.

After the Advocate-General had spoken, the Keeper of the Seals mounted to the King, with the opinions of the Princes of the Blood; then came to the Duc de Sully and me. Fortunately I had more memory than he had, or wished to have; therefore it was exactly my affair. I presented to him my hat with a bunch of feathers in the front, in an express manner very marked, saying to him loudly enough: "No, Monsieur, we cannot be judges; we are parties to the cause, and we have only to thank the King for the justice he renders us."

He smiled and made an excuse. I pushed him away before the Duc de Sully had time to open his mouth; and looking round I saw with pleasure that my refusal had been marked by everybody. The Keeper of the Seals retired as he came, and without taking the opinions of the peers, or of the bishop-peers, went to the marshals of France; thence descended to the Chief-President and to the presidents *à mortier,* and so to the rest of the lower seats; after which, having been to the King and returned to his place, he pronounced the decree of registration, and thus put the finishing touch to my joy.

Immediately after M. le Duc rose, and having made his reverences to the King forgot to sit down and cover himself to speak, according to the uninterrupted

right and usage of the peers of France; therefore not one of us rose. He made, then, slowly and uncovered, the speech which has been printed at the end of the preceding ones, and read it not very intelligibly because his organ was not favourable. As soon as he had finished, M. le Duc d'Orléans rose, and committed the same fault. He said, also standing and uncovered, that the request of M. le Duc appeared to him just; and after some praises added, that M. le Duc du Maine was now reduced to the rank given to him by his peerage, M. le Maréchal de Villeroy, his senior, could no longer remain under him, which was a new and very strong reason in addition to those M. le Duc had alleged. This request had carried to the highest point the astonishment of the assembly and the despair of the Chief-President, and the handful of people who appeared by their embarrassment to be interested in the Duc du Maine. The Maréchal de Villeroy, without knitting his brow, had a disturbed look, and the eyes of the chief accuser oftener were inundated with tears. I was not able to distinguish well his cousin and intimate friend the Maréchal d'Huxelles, who screened himself beneath the vast brim of his hat, thrust over his eyes, and who did not stir. The Chief-President, stunned by this last thunder-bolt, elongated his face so surprisingly, that I thought for a moment his chin had fallen upon his knees.

However, the Keeper of the Seals having called upon the King's people to speak, they replied that they had not heard the proposition of M. le Duc, therefore his paper was passed to them from hand to hand, during which the Keeper of the Seals repeated very kindly what the Regent had added upon the seniority of the Maréchal de Villeroy over the Duc du Maine. Blancmesnil merely threw his eyes upon the paper of M. le Duc, and spoke, after which the Keeper of the Seals

put it to the vote. I gave mine loud enough, and said, "As for this affair I vote with all my heart for giving the superintendence of the King's education to M. le Duc."

The votes being taken, the Keeper of the Seals called the chief *greffier,* ordered him to bring his paper and his little bureau near his, so as to do all at once; and in presence of the King register everything that had been read and resolved, and signed also. This was done without any difficulty, according to forms, under the eyes of the Keeper of the Seals, who never raised them: but as there were five or six documents to register they took up a long time.

I had well observed the King when his education was in question, and I remarked in him no sort of alteration, change, or constraint. This was the last act of the drama: he was quite lively now the registrations commenced. However, as there were no more speeches to occupy him, he laughed with those near, amused himself with everything, even remarking that the Duc de Louvigny had on a velvet coat, and laughed at the heat he must feel, and all this with grace. This indifference for M. du Maine struck everybody, and publicly contradicted what his partisans tried to publish, viz., that his eyes had been red, but that neither at the Bed of Justice, nor since, he had dared to show his trouble. The truth is he had his eyes dry and serene the whole time, and pronounced the name of the Duc du Maine only once since, which was after dinner the same day, when he asked where he had gone, with a very indifferent air, without saying a word more, then or since, or naming his children, who took little trouble to see him; and when they went it was in order to have even in his presence their little court apart, and to divert themselves among themselves. As for the Duc du Maine, either from policy or because he

thought it not yet time, he only saw the King in the morning, sometimes in his bed, and not at all during the rest of the day, except when obliged by his functions.

During the registration I gently passed my eyes over the whole assembly, and though I constantly constrained them, I could not resist the temptation to indemnify myself upon the Chief-President; I perseveringly overwhelmed him, therefore, a hundred different times during the sitting, with my hard-hitting regards. Insult, contempt, disdain, triumph, were darted at him from my eyes, and pierced him to the very marrow: often he lowered his eyes when he caught my gaze: once or twice he raised his upon me, and I took pleasure in annoying him by sly but malicious smiles which completed his vexation. I bathed myself in his rage, and amused myself by making him feel it. I sometimes played with him by pointing him out to my two neighbours when he could perceive this movement; in a word, I pressed upon him without mercy, as heavily as I could.

At last the registration finished, the King descended the throne, and was followed by the Regent, the two Princes of the Blood, and the necessary gentlemen of the suite. At the same time the Marshals of France descended, and while the King traversed the room, accompanied by the deputation which had received him, they passed between the seats of the councillors opposite us, to follow him to the door by which his Majesty departed; and at the same time the two bishop-peers, passing before the throne, came to put themselves at our head, and squeezed my hands and my head (in passing before me) with warm gratification.

We followed them two by two according to seniority, and went straight forward to the door. The Par-

liament began to move directly afterwards. Place was made for us to the steps. The crowd, the people, the display contrasted our conversation and our joy. I was sorry for it.

I immediately gained my coach, which I found near, and which took me skilfully out of the court, so that I met with no check, and in a quarter of an hour after leaving the sitting, I was at home.

I had need of a little rest, for pleasure even is fatigue, and happiness, pure and untroubled as it may be, wearies the spirit. I entered my house, then, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, intending to repose myself, and in order to do so in security, I closed my door to everybody.

Alas! I had not been many minutes at home when I was called away to perform one of the most painful and annoying commissions it was ever my ill fortune to be charged with.

CHAPTER XCIV

A LITTLE while before leaving the Cabinet of the Council for the Bed of Justice, M. le Duc d'Orléans had begged me to go to the Palais Royal with the Keeper of the Seals immediately after the ceremony had ended. As I saw that nothing had been undertaken, I thought myself free of this conference, and was glad to avoid a new proof that I had been in a secret which had excited envy. I went, therefore, straight home, arriving between two and three. I found at the foot of the steps the Duc d'Humières, Louville, and all my family, even my mother, whom curiosity had drawn from her chamber, which she had not left since the commencement of the winter. We remained below in my apartment, where, while changing my coat and my shirt, I replied to their eager questions; when, lo! M. de Biron, who had forced my door which I had closed against everybody, in order to obtain a little repose, was announced.

Biron put his head in at my door, and begged to be allowed to say a word to me. I passed, half-dressed, into my chamber with him. He said that M. le Duc d'Orléans had expected me at the Palais Royal immediately after the Bed of Justice, and was surprised I had not appeared. He added that there was no great harm done; and that the Regent wished to see me now, in order that I might execute a commission for him. I asked Biron what it was? He replied that it was to go to Saint-Clere to announce what had taken place to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans!

This was a thunder-bolt for me. I disputed with

Biron, who exhorted me to lose no time, but to go at once to the Palais Royal, where I was expected with impatience. I returned into my cabinet with him, so changed in aspect that Madame de Saint-Simon was alarmed. I explained what was the matter, and after Biron had chatted a moment, and again pressed me to set out at once, he went away to eat his dinner. Ours was served. I waited a little time in order to recover myself, determined not to vex M. le Duc d'Orléans by dawdling, took some soup and an egg, and went off to the Palais Royal.

It was in vain that, using all the eloquence I could command and all the liberty I dared employ, I protested against being employed for this duty. I represented to the Regent what an ill-chosen messenger I should be to carry to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans news of the disgrace of her brother the Duc du Maine; I, who had always been such an open and declared enemy to the bastards! I represented to him that people would say I went on purpose to triumph over her at what had been done, and that she herself would look upon my presence as a kind of insult. In vain! in vain! were my arguments, my entreaties, my instances. M. le Duc d'Orléans had determined that I should go on this errand, and go I must.

As I left his house to execute my luckless commission, I found one of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans' pages, booted and spurred, who had just arrived from Saint-Cloud. I begged him to return at once, at a gallop, and say, on arriving, to the Duchesse Sforze (one of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans' ladies) that I should be there soon with a message from M. le Duc d'Orléans, and to ask her to meet me as I descended from my coach. My object was to charge her with the message I had to deliver, and not to see Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans at all. But my poor prudence

was confounded by that of the page, who had not less than I. He took good care not to be the bearer of such ill news as he had just learned at the Palais Royal, and which was now everywhere public. He contented himself with saying that I was coming, sent by M. le Duc d'Orléans, spoke not a word to the Duchesse Sforze, and disappeared at once. This is what I afterwards learned, and what I saw clearly enough on arriving at Saint-Cloud.

I went there at a gentle trot, in order to give time to the page to arrive before me, and to the Duchesse Sforze to receive me. During the journey I applauded myself for my address, but feared lest I should be obliged to see Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans after Madame Sforze. I could not imagine that Saint-Cloud was in ignorance of what had occurred, and, nevertheless, I was in an agony that cannot be expressed, and this increased as I approached the end of my journey. If it is disagreeable to announce unpleasant news to the indifferent, how much more is it to announce them to the deeply interested!

Penetrated with this dolorous sentiment I arrived in the grand court of Saint-Cloud, and saw everybody at the windows, running from all parts. I alighted, and asked the first comer to lead me to the Duchesse Sforze, the position of whose apartments I am unacquainted with. I was told that Madame Sforze was in the chapel with Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. Then I asked for the Maréchale de Rochefort, and after a time she arrived, hobbling along with her stick. I disputed with her, wishing to see Madame Sforze, who was not to be found. I was anxious at all events to go to her room and wait, but the inexorable Maréchale pulled me by the arm, asking what news I brought. Worn out at last, I said, "News? news that you are acquainted with."

"How, acquainted with?" she asked. "We know nothing, except that a Bed of Justice has been held, and we are expiring to know why, and what has passed there."

My astonishment at this ignorance was extreme, and I made her swear and repeat four times over that nothing was known at Saint-Cloud. I told her thereupon what had happened, and she, in her turn, astonished, almost fell backwards! But where was Madame Sforze? she came not, and do what I must, say what I might, I was forced to carry my message to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. I was sorely loth to do so, but was dragged by the hand almost as a sheep is led to the slaughter.

I stood before Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans after having passed through an apartment filled with her people, fear painted upon all their faces. I saluted her; but, oh! how differently from my usual manner! She did not perceive this at first, and begged me, with a cheerful natural air, to approach her; but seeing my trouble, she exclaimed, "Good Heavens, Monsieur, what a face you wear! What news bring you?"

Seeing that I remained silent and motionless, she became more moved, and repeated her questions. I advanced a few steps towards her, and at her third appeal, I said: "Madame, you know nothing then?"

"No, Monsieur; I simply know that there has been a Bed of Justice: what has passed there I am quite ignorant of."

"Ah, Madame," I replied, half turning away; "I am more unhappy, then, than I thought to be."

"What is the matter?" exclaimed she; "what has happened?" (rising and sitting bolt upright on the sofa she was stretched upon). "Come near and sit down!"

I approached; stated that I was in despair. She,

more and more moved, said to me, "But speak; better to learn bad news from one's friend than from others."

This remark pierced me to the heart, and made me sensible of the grief I was going to inflict upon her. I summoned up courage, and I told her all.

The tears of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans flowed abundantly at my recital. She did not answer a word, uttered no cry, but wept bitterly. She pointed to a seat and I sat down upon it, my eyes during several instants fixed upon the floor. Afterwards I said that M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had rather forced upon me this commission, than charged me with it, had expressly commanded me to tell her that he had very strong proofs in his hands against M. du Maine; that he had kept them back a long time, but could no longer do so now. She gently replied to me that her brother was very unfortunate and shortly afterwards asked if I knew what his crime was. I said that M. le Duc d'Orléans had not told me; and that I had not dared to question him upon a subject of this nature, seeing that he was not inclined to talk of it.

More tears shortly afterwards filled her eyes. Her brother must be very criminal, she said, to be so treated.

I remained some time upon my seat, not daring to raise my eyes, in the most painful state possible, and not knowing whether to remain or go away. At last I acquainted her with my difficulty; said I fancied she would like to be alone some little time before giving me her orders, but that respect kept me equally in suspense as to whether I should go or stay. After a short silence, she said she should like to see her women. I rose, sent them to her, and said to them, if her Royal Highness asked for me, I should be with the Duchesse Sforze, or the Maréchale Rochefort; but I could find neither of these two ladies, so I went up to Madame.

She rose as soon as I appeared, and said to me, with eagerness, "Well, Monsieur, what news? At the same time her ladies retired, and I was left alone with her.

I commenced by an excuse for not coming to see her first, as was my duty, on the ground that M. le Duc d'Orléans had assured me she would not object to my commencing with Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. She did not object, in fact, but asked me for my news with much eagerness. I told her what had happened. Joy spread over her face. She replied with a mighty, "At last!" which she repeated, saying, her son long since ought to have struck this blow, but that he was too good. I mentioned to her that she was standing, but for politeness she remained so. After some further talk she begged me to state all the details of this celebrated morning.

I again recalled to her mind that she was standing, and represented that what she desired to learn would take a long time to relate; but her ardour to know it was extreme. I began then my story, commencing with the very morning. At the end of a quarter of an hour, Madame seated herself, but with the greatest politeness. I was nearly an hour with her, continually telling and sometimes replying to her questions. She was delighted at the humiliation of the Parliament, and of the bastards, and that her son had at last displayed some firmness.

At this point the Maréchale de Rochefort entered, and summoned me back to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. I found that princess extended upon the sofa where I had left her, an inkstand upon her knees and a pen in her hand. She had commenced a reply to M. le Duc d'Orléans, but had not been able to finish it. Looking at me with an air of gentleness and of friendship, she observed, "Tears escape me; I have begged you to descend in order to render me a service; my

hand is unsteady, I pray you finish my writing for me;" and she handed to me the inkstand and her letter. I took them, and she dictated to me the rest of the epistle, that I at once added to what she had written.

I was infinitely amazed at the conciseness and appropriateness of the expressions she readily found, in the midst of her violent emotion, her sobs, and her tears. She finished by saying that she was going to Montmartre to mourn the misfortunes of her brother, and pray God for his prosperity. I shall regret all my life I did not transcribe this letter. All its expressions were so worthy, so fitting, so measured, everything being according to truth and duty; and the letter, in fact, being so perfectly well written, that although I remember it roughly, I dare not give it, for fear of spoiling it. What a pity that a mind capable of such self-possession, at such a moment, should have become valueless from its leaning towards illegitimacy.

After this I had another interview with Madame, and a long talk with my sure and trusty friend Madame Sforze. Then I set out for Paris, went straight to the Palais Royal, and found M. le Duc d'Orléans with Madame la Duchesse de Berry. He was delighted when he heard what Madame had said respecting him; but he was not particularly pleased when he found that Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans (who after telling me she would go to Montmartre, had changed her mind) was coming to the Palais Royal.

I learned afterwards that she came about half an hour after I left. At first she was all humility and sorrow, hoping to soften the Regent by this conduct. Then she passed to tears, sobs, cries, reproaches, expecting to make him by these means undo what he had done, and reinstate M. du Maine in the position he had lost. But all her efforts proving vain, she adopted another course: her sorrow turned to rage,—her tears

to looks of anger. Still in vain. She could gain nothing; vex and annoy M. le Duc d'Orléans as she might by her conduct. At last, finding there was no remedy to be had, she was obliged to endure her sorrow as best she might.

As for me, I was erased entirely from her books. She looked upon me as the chief cause of what had occurred, and would not see me. I remained ever afterwards at variance with her. I had nothing to reproach myself with, however, so that her enmity did not very deeply penetrate me.

CHAPTER XCV

IT was scarcely to be expected, perhaps, that M. du Maine would remain altogether quiet under the disgrace which had been heaped upon him by the proceedings at the Bed of Justice. Soon indeed we found that he had been secretly working out the most perfidious and horrible schemes for a long time before that assembly; and that after his fall, he gave himself up with redoubled energy to his devilish devices.

Towards the end of this memorable year, 1718, it was discovered that Alberoni, by means of Cellamare, Spanish Ambassador at our Court, was preparing a plot against the Regent. The scheme was nothing less than to throw all the realm into revolt against the government of M. le Duc d'Orléans; to put the King of Spain at the head of the affairs of France, with a council and ministers named by him, and a lieutenant, who would in fact have been regent; this self-same lieutenant to be no other than the Duc du Maine!

This precious plot was, fortunately, discovered before it had come to maturity. Had such not happened, the consequences might have been very serious, although they could scarcely have been fatal. The conspirators counted upon the Parliaments of Paris and of Brittany, upon all the old Court accustomed to the yoke of the bastards, and to that of Madame de Maintenon; and they flung about promises with an unsparing hand to all who supported them. After all, it must be admitted, however, that the measures they took and the men they secured, were strangely unequal to the circumstances of the case, when the details be-

came known; in fact, there was a general murmur of surprise among the public, at the contemptible nature of the whole affair.

But let me relate the circumstances accompanying the discovery of M. du Maine's pitiable treachery.

Cellamare, as I have said, was Spanish Ambassador at our Court. He had been one of the chief movers in the plot. He had excited, as much as lay in his power, discontent against the Regent's government; he had done his best to embroil France with Spain; he had worked heart and soul with M. du Maine, to carry out the common end they had in view. So much preparation had been made; so much of the treason train laid, that at last it became necessary to send to Alberoni a full and clear account of all that had been done, so as to paint exactly the position of affairs, and determine the measures that remained to be taken. But how to send such an account as this? To trust it to the ordinary channels of communication would have been to run a great risk of exposure and detection. To send it by private hand would have been suspicious, if the hand were known, and dangerous if it were not: Cellamare had long since provided for this difficulty.

He had caused a young ecclesiastic to be sent from Spain, who came to Paris as though for his pleasure. There he was introduced to young Monteléon, son of a former ambassador at our Court, who had been much liked. The young ecclesiastic was called the Abbé Portocarrero, a name regarded with favour in France. Monteléon came from the Hague, and was going to Madrid. Portocarrero came from Madrid, and was going back there. What more natural than that the two young men should travel in company? What less natural than that the two young men, meeting each other by pure accident in Paris, should be charged by the ambassador with any packet of consequence, he

having his own couriers, and the use, for the return journey, of those sent to him from Spain? In fact, it may be believed that these young people themselves were perfectly ignorant of what they were charged with, and simply believed that, as they were going to Spain; the ambassador merely seized the occasion to entrust them with some packet of no special importance.

They set out, then, at the commencement of December, furnished with passports from the King—(for Alberoni had openly caused almost a rupture between the two Courts)—with a Spanish banker, who had been established in England, where he had become bankrupt for a large amount, so that the English government had obtained permission from the Regent to arrest him, if they could, anywhere in France. It will sometimes be perceived that I am ill-instructed in this affair; but I can only tell what I know: and as for the rest, I give my conjectures. In fact, the Abbé Dubois kept everybody so much in the dark, that even M. le Duc d'Orléans was not informed of all.

Whether the arrival of the Abbé Portocarrero in Paris, and his short stay there, seemed suspicious to the Abbé Dubois and his emissaries, or whether he had corrupted some of the principal people of the Spanish Ambassador and this Court, and learned that these young men were charged with a packet of importance; whether there was no other mystery than the bad company of the bankrupt banker, and that the anxiety of Dubois to oblige his friends the English, induced him to arrest the three travellers and seize their papers, lest the banker should have confided his to the young men, I know not: but however it may have been, it is certain that the Abbé Dubois arrested the three travellers at Poitiers, and carried off their papers, a courier bringing these papers to him immediately afterwards.

Great things sometimes spring from chance. The courier from Poitiers entered the house of the Abbé Dubois just as the Regent entered the opera. Dubois glanced over the papers, and went and related the news of this capture to M. le Duc Orléans, as he left his box. This prince, who was accustomed to shut himself up with his roués at that hour, did so with a carelessness to which everything yielded, under pretext that Dubois had not had sufficient time to examine all the papers. The first few hours of the morning he was not himself. His head, still confused by the fumes of the wine and by the undigested supper of the previous night, was not in a state to understand anything, and the secretaries of state have often told me that was the time they could make him sign anything. This was the moment taken by Dubois to acquaint the Regent with as much or as little of the contents of the papers as he thought fit. The upshot of their interview was, that the Abbé was allowed by the Duc d'Orléans to have the control of this matter entirely in his own hands.

The day after the arrival of the courier from Poitiers, Cellamare, informed of what had occurred, but who flattered himself that the presence of the banker had caused the arrest of the young men, and the seizure of their papers, hid his fears under a very tranquil bearing, and went, at one o'clock in the day, to M. le Blanc, to ask for a packet of letters he had entrusted to Portocarrero and Monteléon on their return to Spain. Le Blanc (who had had his lesson prepared beforehand by the Abbé Dubois) replied that the packet had been seen; that it contained important things, and that, far from being restored to him, he himself must go back to his hotel under escort, to meet there M. l'Abbé Dubois. The ambassador, who felt that such a compliment would not be attempted with-

out means having been prepared to put it in execution, made no difficulty, and did not lose for a moment his address or his tranquillity.

During the three hours, at least, passed in his house, in the examination of all his bureaux and his boxes, and his papers, Cellamare, like a man who fears nothing, and who is sure of his game, treated M. le Blanc very civilly; as for the Abbé Dubois, with whom he felt he had no measure to keep (all the plot being discovered), he affected to treat him with the utmost disdain. Thus Le Blanc, taking hold of a little casket, Cellamare cried, "M. le Blanc, M. le Blanc, leave that alone; that is not for you; that is for the Abbé Dubois" (who was then present). Then looking at him, he added, "He has been a pander all his life, and there are nothing but women's letters there."

The Abbé Dubois burst out laughing, not daring to grow angry.

When all was examined, the King's seal, and that of the ambassador, were put upon all the bureaux and the caskets which contained papers. The Abbé Dubois and Le Blanc went off together to give an account of their proceedings to the Regent, leaving a company of musketeers to guard the ambassador and his household.

I heard of the capture effected at Poitiers, at home, the morning after it occurred, without knowing anything of those arrested. As I was at table, a servant came to me from M. le Duc d'Orléans, summoning me to a council of the regency, at four o'clock that day. As it was not the usual day for the council, I asked what was the matter. The messenger was surprised at my ignorance, and informed me that the Spanish ambassador was arrested. As soon as I had eaten a morsel, I quitted my company, and hastened to the Palais Royal, where I learnt from M. le Duc d'Or-

léans all that I have just related. Our conversation took up time, and, when it was over, I went away to the Tuileries. I found there astonishment painted upon several faces; little groups of two, three, and four people together; and the majority struck by the importance of the arrest, and little disposed to approve it.

M. le Duc d'Orléans arrived shortly after. He had, better than any man I have ever known, the gift of speech, and without needing any preparation he said exactly what he wanted to say, neither more nor less; his expressions were just and precise, a natural grace accompanied them with an air of proper dignity, always mixed with an air of politeness. He opened the council with a discourse upon the people and the papers seized at Poitiers, the latter proving that a very dangerous conspiracy against the state was on the eve of bursting, and of which the Ambassador of Spain was the principal promoter. His Royal Highness alleged the pressing reasons which had induced him to secure the person of this ambassador, to examine his papers, and to place them under guard. He showed that the protection afforded by the law of nations did not extend to conspiracies, that ambassadors rendered themselves unworthy of that protection when they took part in them, still more when they excited people against the state where they dwelt. He cited several examples of ambassadors arrested for less. He explained the orders he had given so as to inform all the foreign ministers in Paris of what had occurred, and had ordered Dubois to render an account to the council of what he had done at the ambassador's, and offered to read the letters from Cellamare to Cardinal Alberoni, found among the papers brought from Poitiers.

The Abbé Dubois stammered out a short and ill-arranged recital of what he had done at the ambassador's

house, and dwelt upon the importance of the discovery and upon that of the conspiracy as far as already known. The two letters he read left me no doubt that Cellamare was at the head of this affair, and that Alberoni had entered into it as far as he. We were much scandalised with the expressions in these letters against M. le Duc d'Orléans, who was in no way spared.

This prince spoke again, to say he did not suspect the King or Queen of Spain to be mixed up in this affair, but that he attributed it all to the passion of Alberoni, and that of his ambassador to please him, and that he would ask for justice from their Catholic Majesties. He showed the importance of neglecting no means in order to clear up an affair so capital to the repose and tranquillity of the kingdom, and finished by saying, that until he knew more he would name nobody who was mixed up in the matter. All this speech was much applauded, and I believe there were some among the company who felt greatly relieved when they heard the Regent say he would name nobody nor would he allow suspicions to be circulated until all was unravelled.

Nevertheless the next day, Saturday, the 10th of December, more than one arrest was made. Others took place a few days afterwards.

On Tuesday, the 13th of December, all the foreign ministers went to the Palais Royal, according to custom; not one made any complaint of what had happened. A copy of the two letters read at the council was given to them. In the afternoon, Cellamare was placed in a coach with a captain of cavalry and a captain of dragoons, chosen to conduct him to Blois, until Saint-Aignan, our ambassador in Spain, should arrive in France.

The position of our ambassador, Saint-Aignan, at

Madrid, was, as may be imagined, by no means agreeable. The two courts were just upon the point of an open rupture, thanks to the hatred Alberoni had made it a principle to keep up in Spain against M. le Duc d'Orléans, by crying down his actions, his government, his personal conduct, his most innocent acts, and by rendering suspicious even his favourable proceedings with regard to Spain. Alberoni for a long time had ceased to keep on even decent terms with Saint-Aignan, scandalising thus even the most unfavourably disposed towards France. Saint-Aignan only maintained his position by the sagacity of his conduct, and he was delighted when he received orders to return to France. He asked for his parting audience, and meanwhile bade adieu to all his friends and to all the Court. Alberoni, who every moment expected decisive news from Cellamare respecting the conspiracy, wished to remain master of our ambassador, so as, in case of accident, to have a useful hostage in his hands as security for his own ambassador. He put off therefore this parting audience under various pretexts. At last, Saint-Aignan, pressed by his reiterated orders (orders all the more positive because suspicion had already begun to foresee a disturbance ever alarming), spoke firmly to the Cardinal, and declared that if this audience were not at once accorded to him, he would do without it! Therefore the Cardinal, in anger, replied with a menace, that he knew well enough how to hinder him from acting thus.

Saint-Aignan wisely contained himself; but seeing to what sort of a man he was exposed, and judging rightly why he was detained at Madrid, took his measures so secretly and so well, that he set out the same night, with his most necessary equipage, gained ground and arrived at the foot of the Pyrenees without being overtaken and arrested; two occurrences which he ex-

pected at every moment, knowing that Alberoni was a man who would stick at nothing.

Saint-Aignan, already so far advanced, did not deem it advisable to expose himself any longer, bothered as he would be among the mountains by his carriages. He and the Duchess, his wife, followed by a waiting-woman and three valets, with a very trusty guide, mounted upon mules and rode straight for Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port without stopping a moment more on the road than was necessary. He sent on his equipages to Pampeluna at a gentle pace, and placed in his carriage an intelligent *valet de chambre* and a waiting-woman, with orders to pass themselves off as the ambassador and ambassadress of France, and in case they were arrested to cry out a good deal. The arrest did not fail to happen. The people despatched by Alberoni soon came up with the carriage. The pretended ambassador and ambassadress played their parts very well, and they who had arrested them did not doubt for a moment they had made a fine capture, sending news of it to Madrid, and keeping the prisoners in Pampeluna, to which the party returned.

This device saved M. and Madame de Saint-Aignan, and gave them means to reach Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port; as soon as they arrived there they sent for assistance and carriages to Bayonne, which they gained in safety, and reposed after their fatigue. The Duc de Saint-Aignan sent word of all this to M. le Duc d'Orléans by a courier, and, at this arrival in Bayonne, despatched a message to the Governor of Pampeluna, begging him to send on his equipages. Alberoni's people were very much ashamed of having been duped, but Alberoni when he heard of it flew into a furious rage, and cruelly punished the mistake. The equipages were sent on to Bayonne.

CHAPTER XCVI

TO return now to what took place at Paris.

On Sunday, the 25th of December, Christmas Day, M. le Duc d'Orléans sent for me to come and see him at the Palais Royal, about four o'clock in the afternoon. I went accordingly, and after despatching some business with him, other people being present, I followed him into his little winter cabinet at the end of the little gallery, M. le Duc being present.

After a moment of silence, the Regent told me to see if no one was outside in the gallery, and if the door at the end was closed. I went out, found the door shut, and no one near.

This being ascertained, M. le Duc d'Orléans said that we should not be surprised to learn that M. and Madame du Maine had been mixed up all along with this affair of the Spanish Ambassador Cellamare; that he had written proofs of this, and that the project was exactly that which I have already described. He added, that he had strictly forbidden the Keeper of the Seals, the Abbé Dubois, and Le Blanc, who alone knew of this project, to give the slightest sign of their knowledge, recommended to me the same secrecy, and the same precaution; and finished by saying that he wished, above all things, to consult M. le Duc and me upon the course he ought to adopt.

M. le Duc at once went to the point and said M. and Madame du Maine must at once be arrested and put where they could cause no apprehension. I supported this opinion, and showed the perilous annoyances that

might arise if this step were not instantly taken; as much for the purpose of striking terror into the conspirators, as for disconcerting their schemes. I added that there was not a moment to lose, and that it was better to incur uncertain danger than to wait for that which was certain.

Our advice was accepted by M. le Duc d'Orléans, after some little debate. But now the question arose, where are the prisoners to be put? The Bastille and Vincennes both seemed to me too near to Paris. Several places were named without one appearing to suit. At last, M. le Duc d'Orléans mentioned Dourlens. I stopped him short at the name, and recommended it warmly. I knew the governor, Charost, and his son to be men of probity, faithful, virtuous, and much attached to the state. Upon this it was agreed to send M. du Maine to Dourlens.

Then we had to fix upon a place for his wife, and this was more difficult; there were her sex, her fiery temper, her courage, her daring,—all to be considered; whereas, her husband, we knew, so dangerous as a hidden enemy, was contemptible without his mask, and would fall into the lowest state of dejection in prison, trembling all over with fear of the scaffold, and attempting nothing; his wife, on the contrary, being capable of attempting anything.

Various places discussed, M. le Duc d'Orléans smiled, and proposed the château of Dijon! Now, the joke of this suggestion was, that Dijon belonged to M. le Duc, and that he was nephew of Madame du Maine, whom the Regent proposed to lock up there! M. le Duc smiled also, and said it was a little too bad to make him the gaoler of his aunt! But all things considered, it was found that a better choice than Dijon could not be made, so M. le Duc gave way. I fancy he had held out more for form's sake than for any other

reason. These points settled, we separated, to meet another time, in order to make the final arrangements for the arrest.

We met accordingly, the Monday and Tuesday following, and deliberated with the same secrecy as before. On Wednesday we assembled again to put the final touch to our work. Our conference was long, and the result of it was, that M. and Madame du Maine were to be arrested on the morrow; all the necessary arrangements were made, and, as we thought, with the utmost secrecy. Nevertheless, the orders given to the regiment of the guards, and to the musketeers somehow or other transpired during the evening, and gave people reason to believe that something considerable was in contemplation. On leaving the conference, I arranged with Le Blanc that, when the blow was struck, he should inform me by simply sending a servant to inquire after my health.

The morrow, about ten o'clock in the morning, having noiselessly and without show placed the body-guard around Sceaux, La Billardière, lieutenant of the regiment, entered there, and arrested the Duc du Maine as he was leaving his chapel after hearing mass, and very respectfully begged him not to re-enter the house, but to mount immediately into a coach which he had brought. M. du Maine, who had expected this arrest, and who had had time to put his papers in order, made not the slightest resistance. He replied that he had anticipated this compliment for some days, and at once moved into the coach. La Billardière placed himself by his side, and in front was an exempt of the body-guards, and Favancourt, brigadier in the first company of musketeers, destined to guard him in his prison.

As these two latter persons did not appear before the Duc du Maine until the moment he entered the coach, he appeared surprised and moved to see Favancourt.

He would not have been at the exempt, but the sight of the other depressed him. He asked La Billardière what this meant. Billardière could not dissimulate that Favancourt had orders to accompany him, and to remain with him in the place to which they were going. Favancourt himself took this moment to pay his compliments as best he might to the Duc du Maine, to which the Duke replied but little, and that in a civil and apprehensive manner. These proceedings conducted them to the end of the avenue of Sceaux, where the body-guards appeared. The sight of them made the Duc du Maine change colour.

Silence was but little interrupted in the coach. Now and then M. du Maine would say that he was very innocent of the accusation which had been formed against him; that he was much attached to the King, and not less so to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who could not but recognise it; and that it was very unfortunate his Royal Highness should put faith in his enemies (he never named anybody). All this was said in a broken manner, and amid many sighs; from time to time signs of the cross; low mumblings as of prayers; and plunges at each church or each cross they passed. He took his meals in the coach, ate very little, was alone at night, but with good precautions taken. He did not know until the morrow that he was going to Dourlens. He showed no emotion thereupon. All these details I learnt from Favancourt, whom I knew very well, and who was in the Musketeers when I served in that corps.

At the moment of the arrest of M. du Maine, Ancenis, captain of the body-guard, arrested the Duchesse du Maine in her house in the Rue St. Honoré. A lieutenant, and an exempt of the foot body-guards, with other troops, took possession of the house at the same time, and guarded the doors. The compliment of the Duc d'Ancenis was sharply received. Madame

du Maine wished to take away some caskets. Ancenis objected. She demanded, at the least, her jewels; altercations very strong on one side, very modest on the other: but she was obliged to yield. She raged at the violence done to a person of her rank, without saying anything too disobliging to M. d'Ancenis, and without naming anybody. She delayed her departure as long as she could, despite the instances of d'Ancenis, who at last presented his hand to her, and politely, but firmly, said she must go. She found at her door two six-horse coaches, the sight of which much shocked her. She was obliged, however, to mount. Ancenis placed himself by her side, the lieutenant and the exempt of the guard in front, two chambermaids whom she had chosen were in the other coach, with her apparel, which had been examined. The ramparts were followed, the principal streets avoided; there was no stir, and at this she could not restrain her surprise and vexation, or check a tear, declaiming by fits and starts against the violence done her. She complained of the rough coach, the indignity it cast upon her, and from time to time asked where she was being led to. She was simply told that she would sleep at Essonne, nothing more. Her three guardians maintained profound silence. At night all possible precautions were taken. When she set out the next day, the Duc d'Ancenis took leave of her, and left her to the lieutenant and to the exempt of the body-guards, with troops to conduct her. She asked where they were leading her to: he simply replied, "To Fontainebleau." The disquietude of Madame du Maine augmented as she left Paris farther behind, but when she found herself in Burgundy, and knew at last she was to go to Dijon, she stormed at a fine rate.

It was worse when she was forced to enter the castle, and found herself the prisoner of M. le Duc. Fury

suffocated her. She raged against her nephew, and the horrible place chosen for her. Nevertheless, after her first transports, she returned to herself, and began to comprehend that she was in no place and no condition to play the fury. Her extreme rage she kept to herself, affected nothing but indifference for all, and disdainful security. The King's lieutenant of the castle, absolutely devoted to M. le Duc, kept her fast, and closely watched her and her chambermaids. The Prince de Dombes and the Comte d'Eu (her sons) were at the same time exiled to Eu, where a gentleman in ordinary always was near them; Mademoiselle du Maine was sent to Maubuisson.

Several other people were successively arrested and placed either in the Bastille or Vincennes. The commotion caused by the arrest and imprisonment of M. and Madame du Maine was great; many faces, already elongated by the Bed of Justice, were still further pulled out by these events. The Chief-President, D'Effiat, the Maréchal de Villeroy, the Maréchal de Villars, the Maréchal d'Huxelles, and other devoted friends of M. du Maine, were completely terrified; they did not dare to say a word; they kept out of the way; did not leave their houses except from necessity; fear was painted upon their faces. All their pride was put aside; they became polite, caressing, would have eaten out of your hand; and by this sudden change and their visible embarrassment betrayed themselves.

As for the Comte de Toulouse he remained as upright and loyal as ever. The very day of the double arrest he came to M. le Duc d'Orléans and said that he regarded the King, the Regent, and the State as one and the same thing; that he should never be wanting in his duty or in his fidelity towards them; that he was very sorry at what had happened to his brother, but that he was in no way answerable for him. The Re-

gent stated this to me the same day, and appeared, with reason, to be charmed with such straightforward honesty.

This arrest of M. and Madame du Maine had another effect. For some time past, a large quantity of illicit salt had been sold throughout the country. The people by whom this trade was conducted, *faux sauniers,* as they were called, travelled over the provinces in bands well armed and well organized. So powerful had they become that troops were necessary in order to capture them. There were more than five thousand *faux sauniers,* who openly carried on their traffic in Champagne and Picardy. They had become political instruments in the hands of others, being secretly encouraged and commanded by those who wished to sow trouble in the land. It could not be hidden that these *faux sauniers* were redoubtable by their valour and their arrangements; that the people were favourable to them, buying as they did from them salt at a low price, and irritated as they were against the *gabelle* and other imposts; that these *faux sauniers* spread over all the realm, and often marching in large bands, which beat all opposed to them, were dangerous people, who incited the population by their examples to opposition against the government.

I had proposed on one occasion the abolition of the salt tax to the Regent, as a remedy for these evils; but my suggestion shared the fate of many others. It was favourably listened to, and nothing more. And meanwhile the *faux sauniers* had gone on increasing. I had no difficulty in discovering by whom they were encouraged, and the event showed I was right. Directly after the arrest of M. and Madame du Maine, the *faux sauniers* laid down their arms, asked, and obtained pardon. This prompt submission showed clearly enough by whom they had been employed, and

for what rèason. I had uselessly told M. le Duc d'Orléans so long before, who admitted that I was right, but did nothing. It was his usual plan.

Let me finish at once with all I shall have to say respecting M. and Madame du Maine.

They remained in their prisons during the whole of the year 1719, supplied with all the comforts and attentions befitting their state, and much less rigorously watched than at first, thanks to the easy disposition of M. le Duc d'Orléans, whose firmness yielded even more rapidly than beauty to the effects of time. The consequence of his indulgence towards the two conspirators was, that at about the commencement of the following year, 1720, they began to play a very ridiculous comedy, of which not a soul was the dupe, not even the public, nor the principal actors, nor the Regent.

The Duc and Duchesse du Maine, thanks to the perfidy of the Abbé Dubois, had had time to hide away all their papers, and to arrange together the different parts they should play. Madame du Maine, supported by her sex and birth, muffled herself up in her dignity, when replying to the questions addressed to her, of which just as many, and no more, were read to the replying counsel as pleased the Abbé Dubois; and strongly accusing Cellamare and others; protected as much as possible her friends, her husband above all, by charging herself with all; by declaring that what she had done M. du Maine had no knowledge of; and that its object went no farther than to obtain from the Regent such reforms in his administration as were wanted.

The Duc du Maine, shorn of his rank and of his title of prince of the blood, trembled for his life. His crimes against the state,—against the blood royal,—against the person of the Regent, so long, so artfully,

and so cruelly offended, troubled him all the more because he felt they deserved severe punishment. He soon, therefore, conceived the idea of screening himself beneath his wife's petticoats. His replies, and all his observations were to the same tune; perfect ignorance of everything. Therefore when the Duchess had made her confessions, and they were communicated to him, he cried out against his wife,—her madness,—her felony,—his misfortune in having a wife capable of conspiring, and daring enough to implicate him in everything without having spoken to him; making him thus a criminal without being so the least in the world; and keeping him so ignorant of her doings, that it was out of his power to stop them, to chide her, or inform M. le Duc d'Orléans if things had been pushed so far that he ought to have done so!

From that time the Duc du Maine would no longer hear talk of a woman who, without his knowledge, had cast him and his children into this abyss; and when at their release from prison, they were permitted to write and send messages to each other, he would receive nothing from her, or give any signs of life. Madame du Maine, on her side, pretended to be afflicted at this treatment; admitting, nevertheless, that she had acted wrongfully towards her husband in implicating him without his knowledge in her schemes. They were at this point when they were allowed to come near Paris. M. du Maine went to live at Clagny, a château near Versailles, built for Madame de Montespan. Madame du Maine went to Sceaux. They came separately to see M. le Duc d'Orléans at Paris, without sleeping there; both played their parts, and as the Abbé Dubois judged the time had come to take credit to himself in their eyes for finishing their disgrace, he easily persuaded M. le Duc d'Orléans to appear convinced of the innocence of M. du Maine.

During their stay in the two country-houses above-named, where they saw but little company, Madame du Maine made many attempts at reconciliation with her husband, which he repelled. This farce lasted from the month of January (when they arrived at Sceaux and at Clagny) to the end of July. Then they thought the game had lasted long enough to be put an end to. They had found themselves quit of all danger so cheaply, and counted so much upon the Abbé Dubois, that they were already thinking of returning to their former considerations; and to work at this usefully, they must be in a position to see each other, and commence by establishing themselves in Paris, where they would of necessity live together.

The sham rupture had been carried to this extent, that the two sons of the Duc du Maine returned from Eu to Clagny a few days after him, did not for a long time go and see Madame du Maine, and subsequently saw her but rarely, and without sleeping under her roof.

At last a resolution being taken to put an end to the comedy, this is how it was terminated by another.

Madame la Princesse made an appointment with the Duc du Maine at Vaugirard on the last of July, and in the house of Landais, treasurer of the artillery. She arrived there a little after him with the Duchesse du Maine, whom she left in her carriage. She said to M. du Maine she had brought a lady with her who much desired to see him. The thing was not difficult to understand; the piece had been well studied. The Duchesse du Maine was sent for. The apparent reconcilement took place. The three were a long time together. To play out the comedy, M. and Madame du Maine still kept apart, but saw and approached each other by degrees, until at last the former returned to Sceaux, and lived with his wife as before.

CHAPTER XCVII

TO go back, now, to the remaining events of the year 1719.

The Marquise de Charlus, sister of Mezières, and mother of the Marquis de Lévi, who has since become a duke and a peer, died rich and old. She was the exact picture of an "old clothes" woman and was thus subject to many insults from those who did not know her, which she by no means relished. To relieve a little the seriousness of these memoirs, I will here relate an amusing adventure of which she was heroine.

She was very avaricious, and a great gambler. She would have passed the night up to her knees in water in order to play. Heavy gambling at lansquenet was carried on at Paris in the evening, at Madame la Princesse de Conti's. Madame de Charlus supped there one Friday, between the games, much company being present. She was no better clad than at other times, and wore a head-dress, in vogue at that day, called *commode,* not fastened, but put on or taken off like a wig or a night-cap. It was fashionable, then, to wear these head-dresses very high.

Madame de Charlus was near the Archbishop of Rheims, Le Tellier. She took a boiled egg, that she cracked, and in reaching for some salt, set her head-dress on fire, at a candle near, without perceiving it. The Archbishop, who saw her all in flames, seized the head-dress and flung it upon the ground. Madame de Charlus, in her surprise, and indignant at seeing herself thus uncovered, without knowing why, threw her

egg in the Archbishop's face, and made him a fine mess.

Nothing but laughter was heard; and all the company were in convulsions of mirth at the grey, dirty, and hoary head of Madame de Charlus, and the Archbishop's omelette; above all, at the fury and abuse of Madame de Charlus, who thought she had been affronted, and who was a long time before she would understand the cause, irritated at finding herself thus treated before everybody. The head-dress was burnt, Madame la Princesse de Conti gave her another, but before it was on her head everybody had time to contemplate her charms, and she to grow in fury. Her husband died three months after her. M. de Lévi expected to find treasures; there had been such; but they had taken wing and flown away.

About this time appeared some verses under the title of *Philippiques,* which were distributed with extraordinary promptitude and abundance. La Grange, formerly page of Madame la Princesse de Conti, was the author, and did not deny it. All that hell could vomit forth, true and false, was expressed in the most beautiful verses, most poetic in style, and with all the art and talent imaginable. M. le Duc d'Orléans knew it, and wished to see the poem, but he could not succeed in getting it, for no one dared to show it to him.

He spoke of it several times to me, and at last demanded with such earnestness that I should bring it to him, that I could not refuse. I brought it to him accordingly, but read it to him I declared I never would. He took it, therefore, and read it in a low tone, standing in the window of his little cabinet, where we were. He judged it in reading much as it was, for he stopped from time to time to speak to me, and without appearing much moved. But all on a sudden I saw him change countenance, and turn

towards me, tears in his eyes, and himself ready to drop.

"Ah," said he, "this is too much, this horrible poem beats me completely——"

He was at the part where the scoundrel shows M. le Duc d'Orléans having the design to poison the King, and quite ready to execute his crime. It is the part where the author redoubles his energy, his poetry, his invocations, his terrible and startling beauties, his invectives, his hideous pictures, his touching portraits of the youth and innocence of the King, and of the hopes he has, adjuring the nation to save so dear a victim from the barbarity of a murderer; in a word, all that is most delicate, most tender, stringent, and blackest, most pompous, and most moving, is there.

I wished to profit by the dejected silence into which the reading of this poem had thrown M. le Duc d'Orléans, to take from him the execrable paper, but I could not succeed; he broke out into just complaints against such horrible wickedness, and into tenderness for the King; then finished his reading, that he interrupted more than once to speak to me. I never saw a man so penetrated, so deeply touched, so overwhelmed with injustice so enormous and sustained. As for me, I could not contain myself. To see him, the most prejudiced, if of good faith, would have been convinced he was innocent of the crime imputed to him, by the horror he displayed at it. I have said all, when I state that I recovered myself with difficulty, and that I had all the pains in the world to compose him a little.

This La Grange, who was of no personal value, yet a good poet—only that, and never anything else—had, by his poetry, insinuated himself into Sceaux, where he had become one of the great favourites of Madame

du Maine. She and her husband knew his life, his habits, and his mercenary villainy. They knew, too, how to profit by it. He was arrested shortly afterwards, and sent to the Isle de Sainte Marguerite, which he obtained permission to leave before the end of the Regency. He had the audacity to show himself everywhere in Paris, and while he was appearing at the theatres and in all public places, people had the impudence to spread the report that M. le Duc d'Orléans had had him killed! M. le Duc d'Orléans and his enemies have been equally indefatigable; the latter in the blackest villainies, the Prince in the most unfruitful clemency, to call it by no more expressive name.

Before the Regent was called to the head of public affairs, I recommended him to banish Père Tellier when he had the power to do so. He did not act upon my advice, or only partially; nevertheless, Tellier was disgraced, and after wandering hither and thither, a very firebrand wherever he went, he was confined by his superiors in La Flêche.

This tyrant of the Church, furious that he could no longer move, which had been his sole consolation during the end of his reign and his terrible domination, found himself at La Flêche, reduced to a position as insupportable as it was new to him.

The Jesuits, spies of each other, and jealous and envious of those who have the superior authority, are marvellously ungrateful towards those who, having occupied high posts, or served the company with much labour and success, become useless to it, by their age or their infirmities. They regard them with disdain, and instead of bestowing upon them the attention merited by their age, their services, and their merit, leave them in the dreariest solitude, and begrudge them even their food!

I have with my own eyes seen three examples of this in these Jesuits, men of much piety and honour, who had filled positions of confidence and of talent, and with whom I was very intimate. The first had been rector of their establishment at Paris, was distinguished by excellent works of piety, and was for several years assistant of the general at Rome, at the death of whom he returned to Paris; because the rule is, that the new general has new assistants. Upon his return to the Paris establishment he was put into a garret, at the very top of the house, amid solitude, contempt, and want.

The direction of the royal conscience had been the principal occupation of the two others, one of whom had even been proposed as confessor to Madame la Dauphine. One was long ill of a malady he died of. He was not properly nourished, and I sent him his dinner every day, for more than five months, because I had seen his pittance. I sent him even remedies, for he could not refrain from admitting to me that he suffered from the treatment he was subjected to.

The third, very old and very infirm, had not a better fate. At last, being no longer able to hold out, he asked to be allowed to pay a visit to my Versailles house (after having explained himself to me), under pretext of fresh air. He remained there several months, and died at the noviciate in Paris. Such is the fate of all the Jesuits, without excepting the most famous, putting aside a few who having shone at the Court and in the world by their sermons and their merit, and having made many friends—as Pères Bordaloue, La Rue, Gaillard—have been guaranteed from the general disgrace, because, often visited by the principal persons of the Court and the town, policy did not permit them to be treated like the rest, for fear

of making so many considerable people notice what they would not have suffered without disturbance and scandal.

It was, then, in this abandonment and this contempt that Père Tellier remained at La Flêche, although he had from the Regent four thousand livres pension. He had ill-treated everybody. When he was confessor of the King, not one of his brethren approached him without trembling, although most of them were the "big-wigs" of the company. Even the general of the company was forced to bend beneath the despotism he exercised upon all. There was not a Jesuit who did not disapprove the violence of his conduct, or who did not fear it would injure the society. All hated him, as a minister is hated who is coarse, harsh, inaccessible, egotistical, and who takes pleasure in showing his power and his disdain.

His exile, and the conduct that drew it upon him, were fresh motives for hatred against him, unveiling, as they did, a number of secret intrigues he had been concerned in, and which he had great interest in hiding. All these things together did not render agreeable to Tellier his forced retirement at La Flêche. He found there sharp superiors and equals, instead of the general terror his presence had formerly caused among the Jesuits. All now showed nothing but contempt for him, and took pleasure in making him sensible of it. This King of the Church, in part of the State, and in private of his society, became a common Jesuit like the rest, and under superiors; it may be imagined what a hell this was to a man so impetuous and so accustomed to a domination without reply, and without bounds, and abused in every fashion. Thus he did not endure it long. Nothing more was heard of him, and he died after having been only six months at La Flêche.

There was another death, which I may as well mention here, as it occurred about the same time.

On Saturday evening, the 15th of April, 1719, the celebrated and fatal Madame de Maintenon died at Saint-Cyr. What a stir this event would have made in Europe, had it happened a few years earlier. It was scarcely mentioned in Paris!

I have already said so much respecting this woman, so unfortunately famous, that I will say but little more now. Her life at Saint-Cyr was divided between her spiritual duties, the letters she received from her religious correspondents, and the answers she gave to them. She took the communion twice a-week, ordinarily between seven and eight o'clock in the morning; not, as Dangeau says in his Mémoires, at midnight or every day. She was very rich, having four thousand livres pension per month from the Regent, besides other emoluments. She had, too, her estate at Maintenon, and some other property. With all this wealth, too, she had not a farthing of expense at Saint-Cyr. Everything was provided for herself and servants and their horses, even wood, coals, and candles. She had nothing to buy, except dress for herself and for her people. She kept a steward, a valet, people for the horses and the kitchen, a coach, seven or eight horses, one or two others for the saddle, besides having the young ladies of Saint-Cyr, chambermaids, and Mademoiselle d'Aumale to wait upon her.

The fall of the Duc du Maine at the Bed of Justice struck the first blow at her. It is not too much to presume that she was well informed of the measures and the designs of this darling, and that this hope had sustained her; but when she saw him arrested she succumbed; continuous fever seized her, and she died at eighty-three years of age, in the full possession of all her intellect.

Regret for her loss, which was not even universal in Saint-Cyr, scarcely passed the walls of that community. Aubigny, Archbishop of Rouen, her pretended cousin, was the only man I ever heard of, who was fool enough to die of grief on account of it. But he was so afflicted by this loss, that he fell ill, and soon followed her.

CHAPTER XCVIII

MADAME LA DUCHESSE DE BERRY was living as usual, amid the loftiest pride, and the vilest servitude; amid penitence the most austere at the Carmelite convent of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, and suppers the most profaned by vile company, filthiness, and impiety; amid the most shameless debauchery, and the most horrible fear of the devil and death; when lo! she fell ill at the Luxembourg.

I must disguise nothing more, especially as what I am relating belongs to history; and never in these memoirs have I introduced details upon gallantry except such as were necessary to the proper comprehension of important or interesting matters to which they related. Madame la Duchesse de Berry would constrain herself in nothing; she was indignant that people would dare to speak of what she did not take the trouble to hide from them; and nevertheless she was grieved to death that her conduct was known.

She was in the family way by Rion, but hid it as much as she could. Madame de Mouchy was their go-between, although her conduct was as clear as day. Rion and Mouchy, in fact, were in love with each other, and had innumerable facilities for indulging their passion. They laughed at the Princess, who was their dupe, and from whom they drew in council all they could. In one word, they were the masters of her and of her household, and so insolently, that M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, who knew them and hated them, feared them also and temporised with

them. Madame de Saint-Simon, sheltered from all that, extremely loved and respected by all the household, and respected even by this couple who made themselves so much dreaded and courted, only saw Madame la Duchesse de Berry during the moments of presentation at the Luxembourg, whence she returned as soon as all was finished, entirely ignorant of what was passing, though she might have been perfectly instructed.

The illness of Madame la Duchesse de Berry came on, and this illness, ill prepared for by suppers washed down by wine and strong liquors, became stormy and dangerous. Madame de Saint-Simon could not avoid becoming assiduous in her attendance as soon as the peril appeared, but she never would yield to the instances of M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, who, with all the household, wished her to sleep in the chamber allotted to her, and which she never put foot in, not even during the day. She found Madame la Duchesse de Berry shut up in a little chamber, which had private entrances—very useful just then, with no one near her but La Mouchy and Rion, and a few trusty waiting-women. All in attendance had free entrance to this room. M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans were not allowed to enter when they liked; of course it was the same with the lady of honour, the other ladies, the chief *femme de chambre,* and the doctors. All entered from time to time, but ringing for an instant. A bad headache or want of sleep caused them often to be asked to stay away, or, if they entered, to leave directly afterwards. They did not press their presence upon the sick woman, knowing only too well the nature of her malady; but contented themselves by asking after her through Madame de Mouchy, who opened the door to reply to them, keeping it scarcely ajar. This ridiculous pro-

ceeding passed before the crowd of the Luxembourg, of the Palais Royal, and of many other people who, for form's sake or for curiosity, came to inquire the news, and became common town-talk.

The danger increasing, Languet, a celebrated curé of Saint-Sulpice, who had always rendered himself assiduous, spoke of the sacraments to M. le Duc d'Orléans. The difficulty was how to enter and propose them to Madame la Duchesse de Berry. But another and greater difficulty soon appeared. It was this: the curé, like a man knowing his duty, refused to administer the sacrament, or to suffer it to be administered, while Rion or Madame de Mouchy remained in the chamber, or even in the Luxembourg!

He declared this aloud before everybody, expressly in presence of M. le Duc d'Orléans, who was less shocked than embarrassed. He took the curé aside, and for a long time tried to make him give way. Seeing him inflexible, he proposed reference to the Cardinal de Noailles. The curé immediately agreed, and promised to defer to his orders, Noailles being his bishop, provided he was allowed to explain his reasons. The affair passed, and Madame la Duchesse de Berry made confession to a Cordelier, her confessor. M. le Duc d'Orléans flattered himself, no doubt, he would find the diocesan more flexible than the curé. If he hoped so he deceived himself.

The Cardinal de Noailles arrived; M. le Duc d'Orléans took him aside with the curé, and their conversation lasted more than half an hour. As the declaration of the curé had been public, the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris judged it fitting that his should be so also. As all three approached the door of the chamber, filled with company, the Cardinal de Noailles said aloud to the curé, that he had very worthily done his duty, that he expected nothing less from such a good, ex-

perienced, and enlightened man as he was; that he praised him for what he had demanded before administering the sacrament to Madame la Duchesse de Berry; that he exhorted him not to give in, or to suffer himself to be deceived upon so important a thing; and that if he wanted further authorisation he, as his bishop, diocesan, and superior, prohibited him from administering the sacraments, or allowing them to be administered, to Madame la Duchesse de Berry while Rion and Madame de Mouchy were in the chamber, or even in the Luxembourg.

It may be imagined what a stir such inevitable scandal as this made in a room so full of company; what embarrassment it caused M. le Duc d'Orléans, and what a noise it immediately made everywhere. Nobody, even the chiefs of the constitution, the mass without, enemies of the Cardinal de Noailles, the most fashionable bishops, the most distinguished women, the libertines even—not one blamed the curé or his archbishop: some because they knew the rules of the Church, and did not dare to impugn them; others, the majority, from horror of the conduct of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, and hatred drawn upon her by her pride.

Now came the question between the Regent, the Cardinal, and the curé, which should announce this determination to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who in no way expected it, and who, having confessed, expected every moment to see the Holy Sacrament enter, and to take it. After a short colloquy urged on by the state of the patient, the Cardinal and the curé withdrew a little, while M. le Duc d'Orléans slightly opened the door and called Madame de Mouchy. Then, the door ajar, she within, he without, he told her what was in debate. La Mouchy, much astonished, still more annoyed, rode the high horse, talked of her merit, and of

the affront that bigots wished to cast upon her and Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who would never suffer it or consent to it, and that she would die—in the state she was—if they had the impudence and the cruelty to tell it to her.

The conclusion was that La Mouchy undertook to announce to Madame la Duchesse de Berry the resolution that had been taken respecting the sacraments: what she added of her own may be imagined. A negative response did not fail to be quickly delivered to M. le Duc d'Orléans through the half-opened door. Coming through such a messenger, it was just the reply he might have expected. Immediately after, he repeated it to the Cardinal, and to the curé; the curé, being supported by his archbishop, contented himself with shrugging his shoulders. But the Cardinal said to M. le Duc d'Orléans that Madame de Mouchy, one of the two who ought to be sent away, was not a fit person to bring Madame la Duchesse to reason; that it was his duty to carry this message to her, and to exhort her to do her duty as a Christian shortly about to appear before God; and the Archbishop pressed the Regent to go and say so to her. It will be believed, without difficulty, that his eloquence gained nothing. This Prince feared too much his daughter, and would have been but a feeble apostle with her.

Reiterated refusals determined the Cardinal to go and speak to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, accompanied by the curé, and as he wished to set about it at once, M. le Duc d'Orléans, who did not dare to hinder him, but who feared some sudden and dangerous revolution in his daughter at the sight and at the discourses of the two pastors, conjured him to wait until preparations could be made to receive him. He went, therefore, and held another colloquy through the door with Madame de Mouchy, the success of which

was equal to the other. Madame la Duchesse de Berry flew into fury, railed in unruly terms against these hypocritical humbugs, who took advantage of her state and their calling to dishonour her by an unheard-of scandal, not in the least sparing her father for his stupidity and feebleness in allowing it. To have heard her, you would have thought that the curé and the Cardinal ought to be kicked downstairs.

M. le Duc d'Orléans returned to the ecclesiastics, looking very small, and not knowing what to do between his daughter and them. However, he said to them that she was so weak and suffering that they must put off their visit, persuading them as well as he could. The attention and anxiety of the large company which filled the room were extreme: everything was known afterwards, bit by bit, during the day.

The Cardinal de Noailles remained more than two hours with M. le Duc d'Orléans, round whom people gathered at last. The Cardinal, seeing that he could not enter the chamber without a sort of violence, much opposed to persuasion, thought it indecent and useless to wait any longer. In going away, he reiterated his orders to the curé, and begged him to watch so as not to be deceived respecting the sacraments, lest attempts were made to administer them clandestinely. He afterwards approached Madame de Saint-Simon, took her aside, related to her what had passed, and deplored with her a scandal that he had not been able to avoid. M. le Duc d'Orléans hastened to announce to his daughter the departure of the Cardinal, at which he himself was much relieved. But on leaving the chamber he was astonished to find the curé glued against the door, and still more so to hear he had taken up his post there, and meant to remain, happen what might, because he did not wish to be deceived respecting the sacraments. And, indeed, he remained there four

days and four nights, except during short intervals for food and repose that he took at home, quite close to the Luxembourg, and during which his place was filled by two priests whom he left there. At last, the danger being passed, he raised the siege.

Madame la Duchesse de Berry, safely delivered of a daughter, had nothing to do but to re-establish herself; but she remained firm against the curé and the Cardinal de Noailles, neither of whom she ever pardoned. She became more and more bewitched by the two lovers, who laughed at her, and who were attached to her only for their fortune and their interest. She remained shut up without seeing M. and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, except for a few moments; no one, commencing with Madame de Saint-Simon, showed any eagerness to see her, for everybody knew what kept the door shut.

Madame la Duchesse de Berry, infinitely pained by the manner in which everybody, even the people, looked upon her malady, thought to gain a little lost ground by throwing open the gardens of the Luxembourg to the public, after having long since closed them. People were glad: they profited by the act; that was all. She made a vow that she would give herself up to religion, and dress in white—that is, devote herself to the service of the Virgin—for six months. This vow made people laugh a little.

Her illness had begun on the 26th of March, 1719, and Easter-day fell on the 9th of April. She was then quite well, but would not see a soul. A new cause of annoyance had arisen to trouble her. Rion, who saw himself so successful as the lover of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, wished to improve his position by becoming her husband. He was encouraged in this desire by his uncle, M. de Lauzun, who had also advised him to treat her with the rigour, harshness—

nay, brutality, which I have already described. The maxim of M. de Lauzun was, that the Bourbons must be ill-used and treated with a high hand in order to maintain empire over them. Madame de Mouchy was as strongly in favour of this marriage as Rion. She knew she was sure of her lover, and that when he became the husband of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, all the doors which shut intimacy would be thrown down. A secret marriage accordingly took place.

This marriage gave rise to violent quarrels, and much weeping. In order to deliver herself from these annoyances, and at the same time steer clear of Easter, the Duchess resolved to go away to Meudon on Easter Monday. It was in vain that the danger was represented to her, of the air, of the movement of the coach, and of the change of place at the end of a fortnight. Nothing could make her endure Paris any longer. She set out, therefore, followed by Rion and the majority of her ladies and her household.

M. le Duc d'Orléans informed me then of the fixed design of Madame la Duchesse de Berry to declare the secret marriage she had just made with Rion. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans was at Montmartre for a few days, and we were walking in the little garden of her apartments. The marriage did not surprise me much, knowing the strength of her passion, her fear of the devil, and the scandal which had just happened. But I was astonished, to the last degree, at this furious desire to declare the marriage, in a person so superbly proud.

M. le Duc d'Orléans dilated upon his troubles, his anger, that of Madame (who wished to proceed to the most violent extremities), and the great resolve of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. Fortunately the majority of the officers destined to serve against Spain (war with that country had just been declared) were

leaving every day, and Rion had remained solely on account of the illness of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, M. le Duc d'Orléans thought the shortest plan would be to encourage hope by delay, in forcing Rion to depart, flattering himself that the declaration would be put off much more easily in his absence than in his presence. I strongly approved this idea, and on the morrow, Rion received at Meudon a curt and positive order to depart at once and join his regiment in the army of the Duc de Berwick. Madame la Duchesse de Berry was all the more outraged, because she knew the cause of this order, and consequently felt her inability to hinder its execution. Rion on his side did not dare to disobey it. He set out, therefore; and M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had not yet been to Meudon, remained several days without going there.

Father and daughter feared each other, and this departure had not put them on better terms. She had told him, and repeated it, that she was a rich widow, mistress of her own actions, independent of him; had flown into a fury, and terribly abused M. le Duc d'Orléans when he tried to remonstrate with her. He had received much rough handling from her at the Luxembourg when she was better; it was the same at Meudon during the few visits he paid her there. She wished to declare her marriage; and all the art, intellect, gentleness, anger, menace, prayers, and interest of M. le Duc d'Orléans barely sufficed to make her consent to a brief delay.

If Madame had been listened to, the affair would have been finished before the journey to Meudon; for M. le Duc d'Orléans would have thrown Rion out of the windows of the Luxembourg!

The premature journey to Meudon, and quarrels so warm, were not calculated to re-establish a person just returned from the gates of death. The extreme desire

she had to hide her state from the public, and to conceal the terms on which she was with her father (for the rarity of his visits to her began to be remarked), induced her to give a supper to him on the terrace of Meudon about eight o'clock one evening. In vain the danger was represented to her of the cool evening air so soon after an illness such as she had just suffered from, and which had left her health still tottering. It was specially on this account that she stuck more obstinately to her supper on the terrace, thinking that it would take away all suspicion she had been confined, and induce the belief that she was on the same terms as ever with M. le Duc d'Orléans, though the uncommon rarity of his visits to her had been remarked.

This supper in the open air did not succeed. The same night she was taken ill. She was attacked by accidents, caused by the state in which she still was, and by an irregular fever, that the opposition she met with respecting the declaration of her marriage did not contribute to diminish. She grew disgusted with Meudon, like people ill in body and mind, who in their grief attribute everything to the air and the place. She was annoyed at the few visits she received from M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans,—her pride, however, suffering more than her tenderness.

In despite of all reason, nothing could hinder her from changing her abode. She was transferred from Meudon to the Muette, wrapped up in sheets, and in a large coach, on Sunday, the 14th of May, 1719. Arrived so near Paris, she hoped M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans would come and see her more frequently, if only for form's sake.

This journey was painful by the sufferings it caused her, added to those she already had, which no remedies could appease, except for short intervals, and which became very violent. Her illness augmented; but

hopes and fears sustained her until the commencement of July. During all this time her desire to declare her marriage weakened, and M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, as well as Madame, who passed the summer at Saint-Cloud, came more frequently to see her. The month of July became more menacing because of the augmentation of pain and fever. These ills increased so much, in fact, that, by the 14th of July, fears for her life began to be felt.

The night of the 14th was so stormy, that M. le Duc d'Orléans was sent to at the Palais Royal, and awakened. At the same time Madame de Pons wrote to Madame de Saint-Simon, pressing her to come and establish herself at La Muette. Madame de Saint-Simon, although she made a point of scarcely ever sleeping under the same roof as Madame la Duchesse de Berry (for reasons which need no further explanation than those already given), complied at once with this request, and took up her quarters from this time at La Muette.

Upon arriving, she found the danger great. Madame la Duchesse de Berry had been bled in the arm and in the foot on the 10th, and her confessor had been sent for. But the malady still went on increasing. As the pain which had so long afflicted her could not induce her to follow a regimen necessary for her condition, or to think of a future state, relations and doctors were at last obliged to speak a language to her, not used towards princesses, except at the most urgent extremity. This, at last, had its effect. She submitted to the medical treatment prescribed for her, and received the sacrament with open doors, speaking to those present upon her life and upon her state, but like a queen in both instances. After this sight was over, alone with her familiars, she applauded herself for the firmness she had displayed, asked them if she had not

spoken well, and if she was not dying with greatness and courage.

A day or two after, she wished to receive Our Lord once more. She received, accordingly, and as it appeared, with much piety, quite differently from the first time.

At the extremity to which she had arrived, the doctors knew not what to do; everybody was tried. An elixir was spoken of, discovered by a certain Garus, which made much stir just then, and the secret of which the King has since bought. Garus was sent for and soon arrived. He found Madame la Duchesse de Berry so ill that he would answer for nothing. His remedy was given, and succeeded beyond all hopes. Nothing remained but to continue it. Above all things, Garus had begged that nothing should, on any account, be given to Madame la Duchesse de Berry except by him, and this had been most expressly commanded by M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. Madame la Duchesse de Berry continued to be more and more relieved and so restored, that Chirac, her regular doctor, began to fear for his reputation, and taking the opportunity when Garus was asleep upon a sofa, presented, with impetuosity, a purgative to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, and made her swallow it without saying a word to anybody, the two nurses standing by, the only persons present, not daring to oppose him.

The audacity of this was as complete as its villainy, for M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans were close at hand in the salon. From this moment to that in which the patient fell into a state worse than that from which the elixir had drawn her, there was scarcely an interval. Garus was awaked and called. Seeing this disorder, he cried that a purgative had been given, and whatever it might be, it was poison in the

state to which the princess was now reduced. He wished to depart, he was detained, he was taken to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. Then followed a great uproar, cries from Garus, impudence and unequalled hardihood of Chirac, in defending what he had done.

He could not deny it, for the two nurses had been questioned, and had told all. Madame la Duchesse de Berry drew near her end during this debate, and neither Chirac nor Garus could prevent it. She lasted, however, the rest of the day, and did not die until about midnight. Chirac, seeing the death-agony advance, traversed the chamber, made an insulting reverence at the foot of the bed, which was open, and wished her "a pleasant journey" (in equivalent terms), and thereupon went off to Paris. The marvel is that nothing came of this, and that he remained the doctor of M. le Duc d'Orléans as before!

While the end was yet approaching, Madame de Saint-Simon, seeing that there was no one to bear M. le Duc d'Orléans company, sent for me to stand by him in these sad moments. It appeared to me that my arrival pleased him, and that I was not altogether useless to him in relieving his grief. The rest of the day was passed in entering for a moment at a time into the sick-chamber. In the evening I was nearly always alone with him.

He wished that I should charge myself with all the funeral arrangements, and in case Madame la Duchesse de Berry, when opened, should be found to be enceinte, to see that the secret was kept. I proposed that the funeral should be of the simplest, without show or ceremonial. I explained my reasons, he thanked me, and left all the orders in my hands. Getting rid of these gloomy matters as quickly as possible, I walked with him from time to time in the reception

rooms, and in the garden, keeping him from the chamber of the dying as much as possible.

The night was well advanced, and Madame la Duchesse de Berry grew worse and worse, and without consciousness since Chirac had poisoned her. M. le Duc d'Orléans returned into the chamber, approached the head of the bed—all the curtains being pulled back; I allowed him to remain there but a few moments, and hurried him into the cabinet, which was deserted just then. The windows were open, he leaned upon the iron balustrade, and his tears increased so much that I feared lest they should suffocate him. When this attack had a little subsided, he began to talk of the misfortunes of this world, and of the short duration of its most agreeable pleasures. I urged the occasion to say to him everything God gave me the power to say, with all the gentleness, emotion, and tenderness, I could command. Not only he received well what I said to him, but he replied to it and prolonged the conversation.

After we had been there more than an hour, Madame de Saint-Simon gently warned me that it was time to try and lead M. le Duc d'Orléans away, especially as there was no exit from the cabinet, except through the sick-chamber. His coach, that Madame de Saint-Simon had sent for, was ready. It was without difficulty that I succeeded in gently moving away M. le Duc d'Orléans, plunged as he was in the most bitter grief. I made him traverse the chamber at once, and supplicated him to return to Paris. At last he consented. He wished me to remain and give orders, and begged, with much positiveness, Madame de Saint-Simon to be present when seals were put upon the effects, after which I led him to his coach, and he went away. I immediately repeated to Madame de Saint-Simon the orders he had given me respecting the open-

ing of the body, in order that she might have them executed, and I hindered her from remaining in the chamber, where there was nothing now but horror to be seen.

At last, about midnight, on the 21st of July, 1719, Madame la Duchesse de Berry died, ten days after Chirac had consummated his crime. M. le Duc d'Orléans was the only person touched. Some people grieved; but not one of them who had enough to live upon appeared ever to regret her loss. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans felt her deliverance, but paid every attention to decorum. Madame constrained herself but little. However affected M. le Duc d'Orléans might be, consolation soon came. The yoke to which he had submitted himself, and which he afterwards found heavy, was severed. Above all, he was free from all annoyance on the score of Rion's marriage, and its results, annoyance that would have been all the greater, inasmuch as at the opening of the poor princess she was found to be again enceinte; it was also found that her brain was deranged. These circumstances were for the time carefully hidden. It may be imagined what a state Rion fell into in learning at the army the death of Madame la Duchesse de Berry. All his romantic notions of ambition being overturned, he was more than once on the point of killing himself, and for a long time was always kept in sight by his friends. He sold out at the end of the campaign. As he had been gentle and polite to his friends, they did not desert him. But he ever afterwards remained in obscurity.

On account of this death the theatres were closed for eight days.

On Saturday, the 22nd of July, the heart of Madame la Duchesse de Berry was taken to the Val-de-Grace.

On Sunday, the 23rd of July, her body was carried

in an eight-horse coach to Saint-Denis. There was very little display; only about forty torches were carried by pages and guards.

The funeral service was performed at Saint-Denis in the early part of September. There was no funeral oration.

Madame de Saint-Simon had been forced, as I have shown, to accept the post of lady of honour to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, and had never been able to quit it. She had been treated with all sorts of consideration, had been allowed every liberty, but this did not console her for the post she occupied; so that she felt all the pleasure, not to say the satisfaction, of a deliverance she did not expect, from a princess twenty-four years of age. But the extreme fatigue of the last days of the illness, and of those which followed death, caused her a malignant fever, which left her at death's portal during six weeks in a house at Passy. She was two months recovering herself.

This accident, which almost turned my head, sequestered me from anything for two months, during which I never left the house, scarcely left the sick-chamber, attended to nothing, and saw only a few relatives or indispensable friends.

When my wife began to be re-established, I asked M. le Duc d'Orléans for a lodging at the new château at Meudon. He lent me the whole château, completely furnished. We passed there the rest of this summer, and several other summers afterwards. It is a charming place for rides or drives. We counted upon seeing only our friends there, but the proximity to Paris overwhelmed us with people, so that all the new château was sometimes completely filled, without reckoning the people of passage.

I have little need to say anything more of Madame la Duchesse de Berry. These pages have already

painted her. She was a strange mixture of pride and shamelessness. Drunkenness, filthy conversation, debauchery of the vilest kind, and impiety, were her diversions, varied, as has been seen, by occasional religious fits. Her indecency in everything, language, acts, behaviour, passed all bounds; and yet her pride was so sublime that she could not endure that people should dare to speak of her amid her depravity, so universal and so public; she had the hardihood to declare that nobody had the right to speak of persons of her rank, or blame their most notorious actions!

Yet she had by nature a superior intellect, and, when she wished, could be agreeable and amiable. Her face was commanding, though somewhat spoiled at last by fat. She had much eloquence, speaking with an ease and precision that charmed and overpowered. What might she not have become, with the talents she possessed! But her pride, her violent temper, her irreligion, and her falsehood, spoiled all, and made her what we have seen her.

CHAPTER XCIX

LAW had established his Mississippi Company, and now began to do marvels with it. A sort of language had been invented, to talk of this scheme, language which, however, I shall no more undertake to explain than the other finance operations. Everybody was mad upon Mississippi Stock. Immense fortunes were made, almost in a breath; Law, besieged in his house by eager applicants, saw people force open his door, enter by the windows from the garden, drop into his cabinet down the chimney! People talked only of millions!

Law, who, as I have said, came to my house every Tuesday, between eleven and twelve, often pressed me to receive some shares for nothing, offering to manage them without any trouble to me, so that I must gain to the amount of several millions! So many people had already gained enormously by their own exertions that it was not doubtful Law could gain for me even more rapidly. But I never would lend myself to it. Law addressed himself to Madame de Saint-Simon, whom he found as inflexible. He would have much preferred to enrich me than many others; so as to attach me to him by interest, intimate as he saw me with the Regent. He spoke to M. le Duc d'Orléans, even, so as to vanquish me by his authority. The Regent attacked me more than once, but I always eluded him.

At last, one day when we were together by appointment, at Saint-Cloud, seated upon the balustrade of the orangery, which covers the descent into the wood of the goulottes, the Regent spoke again to me of the

Mississippi, and pressed me to receive some shares from Law.

The more I resisted, the more he pressed me, and argued; at last he grew angry, and said that I was too conceited, thus to refuse what the King wished to give me (for everything was done in the King's name), while so many of my equals in rank and dignity were running after these shares. I replied that such conduct would be that of a fool, the conduct of impertinence, rather than of conceit; that it was not mine, and that since he pressed me so much I would tell him my reasons. They were, that since the fable of Midas, I had nowhere read, still less seen, that anybody had the faculty of converting into gold all he touched; that I did not believe this virtue was given to Law, but thought that all his knowledge was a learned trick, a new and skilful juggle, which put the wealth of Peter into the pockets of Paul, and which enriched one at the expense of the other; that sooner or later the game would be played out, that an infinity of people would be ruined; finally, that I abhorred to gain at the expense of others, and would in no way mix myself up with the Mississippi scheme.

M. le Duc d'Orléans knew only too well how to reply to me, always returning to his idea that I was refusing the bounties of the King. I said that I was so removed from such madness, that I would make a proposition to him, of which assuredly I should never have spoken, but for his accusation.

I related to him the expense to which my father had been put in defending Blaye against the party of M. le Prince in years gone by. How he had paid the garrison, furnished provisions, cast cannon, stocked the place, during a blockade of eighteen months, and kept up, at his own expense, within the town, five hundred gentlemen, whom he had collected together. How he

had been almost ruined by the undertaking, and had never received a sou, except in warrants to the amount of five hundred thousand livres, of which not one had ever been paid, and that he had been compelled to pay yearly the interest of the debts he had contracted, debts that still hung like a mill-stone upon me. My proposition was—that M. le Duc d'Orléans should indemnify me for this loss, I giving up the warrants, to be burnt before him.

This he at once agreed to. He spoke of it the very next day to Law: my warrants were burnt by degrees in the cabinet of M. le Duc d'Orléans, and it was by this means I paid for what I had done at La Ferté.

Meanwhile the Mississippi scheme went on more swimmingly than ever. It was established in the Rue Quincampoix, from which horses and coaches were banished. About the end of October of this year, 1717, its business so much increased, that the office was thronged all day long, and it was found necessary to place clocks and guards with drums at each end of the street, to inform people, at seven o'clock in the morning, of the opening of business, and of its close at night: fresh announcements were issued, too, prohibiting people from going there on Sundays and fête days.

Never had excitement or madness been heard of which approached this.

M. le Duc d'Orléans distributed a large number of the Company's shares to all the general officers and others employed in the war against Spain. A month after, the value of the specie was diminished; then the whole of the coin was re-cast.

Money was in such abundance—that is to say, the notes of Law, preferred then to the metallic currency—that four millions were paid to Bavaria, and three millions to Sweden, in settlement of old debts. Shortly

after, M. le Duc d'Orléans gave 80,000 livres to Meuse, and 80,000 livres to Madame de Châteauthiers, dame d'atours of Madame. The Abbé Alari, too, obtained 2000 livres pension. Various other people had augmentation of income given to them at this time.

Day by day Law's bank and his Mississippi increased in favour. The confidence in them was complete. People could not change their lands and their houses into paper fast enough, and the result of this paper was, that everything became dear beyond all previous experience. All heads were turned. Foreigners envied our good fortune, and left nothing undone to have a share in it. The English, even, so clear and so learned in banks, in companies, in commerce, allowed themselves to be caught, and bitterly repented it afterwards. Law, although cold and discreet, felt his modesty giving way. He grew tired of being a subaltern. He hankered after greatness in the midst of this splendour; the Abbé Dubois and M. le Duc d'Orléans desired it for him more than he; nevertheless, two formidable obstacles were in the way: Law was a foreigner and a heretic, and he could not be naturalised without a preliminary act of abjuration. To perform that, somebody must be found to convert him, somebody upon whom good reliance could be placed. The Abbé Dubois had such a person all ready in his pocket, so to speak. The Abbé Tencin was the name of this ecclesiastic, a fellow of debauched habits and shameless life, whom the devil has since pushed into the most astonishing good fortune; so true it is that he sometimes departs from his ordinary rules, in order to recompense his servitors, and by these striking examples dazzle others, and so secure them.

As may be imagined, Law did not feel very proud of the Abbé who had converted him: more especially as that same Abbé was just about this time publicly

convicted of simony, of deliberate fraud, of right-down lying (proved by his own handwriting), and was condemned by the Parliament to pay a fine, which branded him with infamy, and which was the scandal of the whole town. Law, however, was converted, and this was a subject which supplied all conversation.

Soon after, he bought, for one million livres, the Hôtel Mazarin for his bank, which until then had been established in a house he hired of the Chief-President, who had not need of it, being very magnificently lodged in the Palace of the Parliament by virtue of his office. Law bought, at the same time, for 550,000 livres, the house of the Comte de Tessé.

Yet it was not all sunshine with this famous foreigner, for the sky above him was heavy with threatening clouds. In the midst of the flourishing success of his Mississippi, it was discovered that there was a plot to kill him. Thereupon sixteen soldiers of the regiment of the Guards were given to him as a protection to his house, and eight to his brother, who had come to Paris some little time before.

Law had other enemies besides those who were hidden. He could not get on well with Argenson, who, as comptroller of the finances, was continually thrown into connection with him. The disorder of the finances increased in consequence every day, as well as the quarrels between Law and Argenson, who each laid the blame upon the other. The Scotchman was the best supported, for his manners were pleasing, and his willingness to oblige infinite. He had, as it were, a finance tap in his hand, and he turned it on for every one who helped him. M. le Duc, Madame la Duchesse, Tessé, Madame de Verue, had drawn many millions through this tap, and drew still. The Abbé Dubois turned it on as he pleased. These were grand

supports, besides that of M. le Duc d'Orléans, who could not part with his favourite.

Argenson, on the contrary, was not much liked. He had been at the head of the police so long that he could not shake off the habits he had acquired in that position. He had been accustomed to give audiences upon all sorts of police matters at dead of night, or at the small hours of the morning, and he appeared to see no reason why he should not do the same now that he was Keeper of the Seals. He irritated people beyond all bearing, by making appointments with them at these unreasonable hours, and threw into despair all who worked under him, or who had business with him. The difficulty of the finances, and his struggles with Law, had thrown him into ill-humour, which extended through all his refusals. Things, in fact, had come to such a pass, that it was evident one or the other must give up an administration which their rivalry threw into confusion.

Argenson saw the storm coming, and feeling the insecurity of his position, wished to save himself. He had too much sense and too much knowledge of the world not to feel that if he obstinately clung to the finances he should not only lose them but the seals also. He yielded therefore to Law, who was at last declared comptroller-general of the finances, and who, elevated to this (for him) surprising point, continued to visit me as usual every Tuesday morning, always trying to persuade me into belief of his past miracles, and of those to come.

Argenson remained Keeper of the Seals, and skilfully turned to account the sacrifice he had made by obtaining through it the permission to surrender his appointment of Chancellor of the Order of Saint-Louis to his eldest son, and the title, effectively, to his younger son. His place of Conseiller d'Etat, that

he had retained, he also gave to his eldest son, and made the other lieutenant of police. The murmur was great upon seeing a foreigner comptroller-general, and all abandoned to a finance system which already had begun to be mistrusted. But Frenchmen grow accustomed to everything, and the majority were consoled by being no longer exposed to the sharp humour of Argenson, or his strange hours of business.

But Law's annoyances were not over when this change had been made. M. le Prince de Conti began to be troublesome. He was more grasping than any of his relatives, and that is not saying a little. He accosted Law now, pistol in hand, so to speak, and with a perfect "money or your life" manner. He had already amassed mountains of gold by the easy humour of M. le Duc d'Orléans; he had drawn, too, a good deal from Law, in private. Not content with this, he wished to draw more. M. le Duc d'Orléans grew tired, and was not over-pleased with him. The Parliament just then was at its tricks again; its plots began to peep out, and the Prince de Conti joined in its intrigues in order to try and play a part indecent, considering his birth; little fitting his age; shameful, after the monstrous favours unceasingly heaped upon him.

Repelled by the Regent, he turned, as I have said, towards Law, hoping for more success. His expectations were deceived; prayers, cringing meanness (for he stopped at nothing to get money) being of no effect, he tried main strength, and spared Law neither abuse nor menaces. In fact, not knowing what else to do to injure his bank, he sent three waggons there, and drove them away full of money, which he made Law give him for paper he held. Law did not dare to refuse, and thus show the poverty of his metallic funds, but

fearing to accustom so insatiable a prince to such tyranny as this, he went, directly the waggons left, to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and complained of what had occurred. The Regent was much annoyed; he saw the dangerous results, and the pernicious example of so violent a proceeding, directed against an unsupported foreigner, whom rather lightly he had just made comptroller-general. He flew into a violent rage, sent for the Prince de Conti, and, contrary to his nature, reprimanded him so severely, that he was silenced and cried for mercy. But annoyed at having failed, and still more at the sharp scolding he had received, the Prince de Conti consoled himself, like a woman, by spreading all sorts of reports against Law, which caused him but little fear, and did him still less harm, but which did slight honour to M. le Prince de Conti, because the cause of these reports, and also the large sums he had drawn from the financier, were not unknown to the public; blame upon him was general, and all the more heavy, because Law had fallen out of public favour, which a mere trifle had changed into spite and indignation.

This is the trifle. The Maréchal de Villeroy, incapable of inspiring the King with any solid ideas, adoring even to worship the deceased King, full of wind, and lightness, and frivolity, and of sweet recollections of his early years, his grace at fêtes and ballets, his splendid gallantries, wished that the King, in imitation of the deceased monarch, should dance in a ballet. It was a little too early to think of this. This pleasure seemed a trifle too much of pain to so young a King; his timidity should have been vanquished by degrees, in order to accustom him to society which he feared, before engaging him to show himself off in public, and dance upon a stage.

The deceased King,—educated in a brilliant Court,

where rule and grandeur were kept up with much distinction, and where continual intercourse with ladies, the Queen-mother, and others of the Court, had early fashioned and emboldened him,—had relished and excelled in these sorts of fêtes and amusements, amid a crowd of young people of both sexes, who all rightfully bore the names of nobility, and amongst whom scarcely any of humble birth were mixed, for we cannot call thus some three or four of coarser stuff, who were admitted simply for the purpose of adding strength and beauty to the ballet, by the grace of their faces and the elegance of their movements, with a few dancing-masters to regulate and give the tone to the whole. Between this time and that I am now speaking of was an abyss. The education of those days instructed every one in grace, address, exercise, respect for bearing, graduated and delicate politeness, polished and decent gallantry. The difference, then, between the two periods is seen at a glance, without time lost in pointing it out.

Reflection was not the principal virtue of the Maréchal de Villeroy. He thought of no obstacle either on the part of the King or elsewhere, and declared that his Majesty would dance in a ballet. Everything was soon ready for the execution. It was not so with the action. It became necessary to search for young people who could dance: soon, whether they danced ill or well, they were gladly received; at last the only question was, "Whom can we get?" consequently a sorry lot was obtained. Several, who ought never to have been admitted, were, and so easily, that from one to the other Law had the temerity to ask M. le Duc d'Orléans to allow his son, who danced very well, to join the ballet company! The Regent, always easy, still enamoured of Law, and, to speak truth, purposely contributing as much as possible to confusion of rank,

immediately accorded the demand, and undertook to say so to the Maréchal de Villeroy.

The Maréchal, who hated and crossed Law with might and main, reddened with anger, and represented to the Regent what, in fact, deserved to be said: the Regent, in reply, named several young people, who, although of superior rank, were not so well fitted for the ballet as young Law; and although the answer to this was close at hand, the Maréchal could not find it, and exhausted himself in vain exclamations. He could not, therefore, resist the Regent; and having no support from M. le Duc, superintendent of the King's education and a great protector of Law and of confusion, he gave in, and the financier's son was named for the ballet.

It is impossible to express the public revolt excited by this bagatelle, at which every one was offended. Nothing else was spoken of for some days; tongues wagged freely, too; and a good deal of dirty water was thrown upon other dancers in the ballet.

At last the public was satisfied. The small-pox seized Law's son, and (on account of its keeping him from the ballet) caused universal joy. The ballet was danced several times, its success answering in no way to the Maréchal de Villeroy. The King was so wearied, so fatigued, with learning, with rehearsing, and with dancing this ballet, that he took an aversion for these fêtes and for everything offering display, which has never quitted him since, and which does not fail to leave a void in the Court; so that this ballet ceased sooner than was intended, and the Maréchal de Villeroy never dared to propose another.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, either by his usual facility, or to smooth down the new elevation of Law to the post of comptroller-general, bestowed a number of pecuniary favours; he gave 600,000 livres to La Fare, cap-

tain of his guard; 100,000 livres to Castries, chevalier d'honneur to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans; 200,000 livres to the old Prince de Courtenay, who much needed them; 20,000 livres pension to the Prince de Talmont; 6000 livres to the Marquise de Bellefonds, who already had a similar sum; and moved by cries on the part of M. le Prince de Conti, 60,000 livres to the Comte de la Marche his son, scarcely three years old; he gave, also, smaller amounts to various others. Seeing so much depredation, and no recovery to hope for, I asked M. le Duc d'Orléans to attach 12,000 livres, by way of increase, to my government of Senlis, which was worth only 1000 livres, and of which my second son had the reversion. I obtained it at once.

CHAPTER C

ABOUT the commencement of the new year, 1720, the system of Law approached its end. If he had been content with his bank—his bank within wise and proper limits—the money of the realm might have been doubled, and an extreme facility afforded to commerce and to private enterprise, because, the establishment always being prepared to meet its liabilities, the notes it issued would have been as good as ready money, and sometimes even preferable, on account of the facility of transport. It must be admitted, however, as I declared to M. le Duc d'Orléans in his cabinet, and as I openly said in the Council of the Regency when the bank passed there, that good as this establishment might be in itself, it could only be so in a republic, or in a monarchy, like that of England, where the finances are absolutely governed by those who furnish them, and who simply furnish as much or as little as they please; but in a trivial, changing, and more than absolute state like France solidity necessarily is wanting, consequently confidence (at least of a discreet and proper kind): since a king, and under his name, a mistress, a minister, favourites; still more, extreme necessities, such as the deceased King experienced in the years 1707-8-9 and 10,—a hundred things, in fact, could overthrow the bank, the allurements of which were, at once, too great and too easy. But to add to the reality of this bank, the chimera of the Mississippi, with its shares, its special jargon, its science (a continual juggle for drawing money from one person to give it to another), was to almost guar-

antee that these shares should at last end in smoke (since we had neither mines, nor quarries of the philosopher's stone), and that the few would be enriched at the expense of the many, as in fact happened.

What hastened the fall of the bank, and of the system, was the inconceivable prodigality of M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, without bounds, and worse still, if it can be, without choice, could not resist the importunities even of those whom he knew, beyond all doubt, to have been the most opposed to him, and who were completely despicable, but gave with open hands; and more frequently allowed money to be drawn from him by people who laughed at him, and who were grateful only to their effrontery. People with difficulty believe what they have seen; and posterity will consider as a fable what we ourselves look upon as a dream. At last, so much was given to a greedy and prodigal nation, always covetous and in want on account of its luxury, its disorder, and its confusion of ranks, that paper became scarce, and the mills could not furnish enough.

It may be imagined by this, what abuse had been made of a bank, established as a resource always ready, but which could not exist as such without being always delicately adjusted; and above all, kept in a state to meet the obligations it had contracted. I obtained information on this point from Law, when he came to me on Tuesday mornings; for a long time he played with me before admitting his embarrassments, and complained modestly and timidly, that the Regent was ruining everything by his extravagance. I knew from outsiders more than he thought, and it was this that induced me to press him upon his balance-sheet. In admitting to me, at last, although faintly, what he could no longer hide, he assured me he should not be wanting in resources provided M. le Duc d'Orléans

left him free. That did not persuade me. Soon after, the notes began to lose favour; then to fall into discredit, and the discredit to become public. Then came the necessity to sustain them by force, since they could no longer be sustained by industry; and the moment force showed itself every one felt that all was over. Coercive authority was resorted to; the use of gold, silver, and jewels was suppressed (I speak of coined money); it was pretended that since the time of Abraham,—Abraham, who paid ready money for the sepulchre of Sarah,—all the civilised nations in the world had been in the greatest error and under the grossest delusion, respecting money and the metals it is made of; that paper alone was useful and necessary; that we could not do greater harm to our neighbours—jealous of our greatness and of our advantages—than to send to them all our money and all our jewels; and this idea was in no way concealed, for the Indian Company was allowed to visit every house, even Royal houses, confiscate all the louis d'or, and the coins it could find there; and to leave only pieces of twenty sous and under (to the amount of not more than 200 francs), for the odd money of bills, and in order to purchase necessary provisions of a minor kind, with prohibitions, strengthened by heavy punishment, against keeping more; so that everybody was obliged to take all the ready money he possessed to the bank, for fear of its being discovered by a valet. But nobody, as may be imagined, was persuaded of the justice of the power accorded to the Company, and accordingly authority was more and more exerted; all private houses were searched, informations were laid against people in order that no money might be kept back, or if it were, that the guilty parties might be severely punished.

Never before had sovereign power been so violently

exercised, never had it attacked in such a manner the temporal interests of the community. Therefore was it by a prodigy, rather than by any effort or act of the government, that these terribly new ordonnances failed to produce the saddest and most complete revolutions; but there was not even talk of them; and although there were so many millions of people, either absolutely ruined or dying of hunger, and of the direst want, without means to procure their daily subsistence, nothing more than complaints and groans was heard.

This violence was, however, too excessive, and in every respect too indefensible to last long; new paper and new juggling tricks were of necessity resorted to; the latter were known to be such—people felt them to be such—but they submitted to them rather than not have twenty crowns in safety in their houses; and a greater violence made people suffer the smaller. Hence so many projects, so many different faces in finance, and all tending to establish one issue of paper upon another; that is to say, always causing loss to the holders of the different paper (everybody being obliged to hold it), and the universal multitude. This is what occupied all the rest of the government, and of the life of M. le Duc d'Orléans; which drove Law out of the realm; which increased six-fold the price of all merchandise, all food even the commonest; which ruinously augmented every kind of wages, and ruined public and private commerce; which gave, at the expense of the public, sudden riches to a few noblemen who dissipated it, and were all the poorer in a short time; which enabled many financiers' clerks, and the lowest dregs of the people, profiting by the general confusion, to take advantage of the Mississippi, and make enormous fortunes; which occupied the government several years after the death of M. le Duc d'Or-

léans; and which, to conclude, France never will recover from, although it may be true that the value of land is considerably augmented. As a last affliction, the all-powerful, especially the princes and princesses of the blood, who had been mixed up in the Mississippi, and who had used all their authority to escape from it without loss, re-established it upon what they called the Great Western Company, which with the same juggles and exclusive trade with the Indies, is completing the annihilation of the trade of the realm, sacrificed to the enormous interest of a small number of private individuals, whose hatred and vengeance the government has not dared to draw upon itself by attacking their delicate privileges.

Several violent executions, and confiscations of considerable sums found in the houses searched, took place. A certain Adine, employed at the bank, had 10,000 crowns confiscated, was fined 10,000 francs, and lost his appointment. Many people hid their money with so much secrecy, that, dying without being able to say where they had put it, these little treasures remained buried and lost to the heirs.

In the midst of the embarrassments of the finances, and in spite of them, M. le Duc d'Orléans continued his prodigal gifts. He attached pensions of 6000 livres and 4000 livres to the grades of lieutenant-general and camp-marshal. He gave a pension of 20,000 livres to old Montauban; one of 6000 livres to M. de Montauban (younger brother of the Prince de Guéméné); and one of 6000 livres to the Duchesse de Brissac. To several other people he gave pensions of 4000 livres; to eight or ten others, 3000 or 2000 livres. I obtained one of 8000 livres for Madame Maréchal de Lorges; and one of 6000 livres was given to the Maréchal de Chamilly, whose affairs were much deranged by the Mississippi. M. de Soubise and the

Marquis Noailles had each upwards of 200,000 livres. Even Saint-Geniès, just out of the Bastille, and banished to Beauvais, had a pension of 1000. Everybody in truth wanted an augmentation of income, on account of the extreme high price to which the commonest, almost necessary things had risen, and even all other things; which, although at last diminshed by degrees, remain to this day much dearer than they were before the Mississippi.

The pensions being given away, M. le Duc d'Orléans began to think how he could reduce the public expenditure. Persuaded by those in whose financial knowledge he had most confidence, he resolved to reduce to two per cent. the interest upon all the funds. This much relieved those who paid, but terribly cut down the income of those who received, that is to say, the creditors of the state, who had lent their money at five per cent., according to the loan—and, public faith and usage, and who had hitherto peacefully enjoyed that interest. M. le Duc d'Orléans assembled at the Palais Royal several financiers of different rank, and resolved with them to pass this edict. It made much stir among the Parliament men, who refused to register it. But M. le Duc d'Orléans would not change his determination, and maintained his decree in spite of them.

By dint of turning and turning around the Mississippi, not to say of juggling with it, the desire came to establish, according to the example of the English, colonies in the vast countries beyond the seas. In order to people these colonies, persons without means of livelihood, sturdy beggars, female and male, and a quantity of public creatures were carried off. If this had been executed with discretion and discernment, with the necessary measures and precautions, it would have ensured the object proposed, and relieved Paris

and the provinces of a heavy, useless, and often dangerous burthen; but in Paris and elsewhere so much violence, and even more roguery, were mixed up with it, that great murmuring was excited. Not the slightest care had been taken to provide for the subsistence of so many unfortunate people, either while in the place they were to embark from, or while on the road to reach it; by night they were shut up, with nothing to eat, in barns, or in the dry ditches of the towns they stopped in, all means of egress being forbidden them. They uttered cries which excited pity and indignation; but the alms collected for them not being sufficient, still less the little their conductors gave them, they everywhere died in frightful numbers.

This inhumanity, joined to the barbarity of the conductors, to violence of a kind unknown until this, and to the rascality of carrying off people who were not of the prescribed quality, but whom others thus got rid of by whispering a word in the ear of the conductors and greasing their palms; all these things, I say, caused so much stir, so much excitement, that the system, it was found, could not be kept up. Some troops had been embarked, and during the voyage were not treated much better than the others. The persons already collected were set at liberty, allowed to do what they pleased, and no more were seized. Law, regarded as the author of these seizures, became much detested, and M. le Duc d'Orléans repented having ever fallen in with the scheme.

The 22nd of May of this year, 1720, became celebrated by the publication of a decree of the Council of State, concerning the shares of the Company of the Indies (the same as that known under the name of Mississippi) and the notes of Law's bank. This decree diminished by degrees, and from month to month, the value of the shares and the notes, so that, by the

end of the year, that value would have been reduced one-half.

This, in the language of finance and of bankruptcy, was to turn tail with a vengeance: and its effect, while remedying nothing, was to make people believe that things were in a worse state than was actually the case. Argenson, who, as we have seen, had been turned out of the finances to make room for Law, was generally accused of suggesting this decree out of malice, already foreseeing all the evils that must arise from it. The uproar was general and frightful. There was not a rich person who did not believe himself lost without resource; not a poor one who did not see himself reduced to beggary. The Parliament, so opposed to the new money system, did not let slip this fine opportunity. It rendered itself the protector of the public by refusing to register the decree, and by promptly uttering the strongest remonstrance against it. The public even believed that to the Parliament was due the sudden revocation of the edict, which, however, was simply caused by the universal complaining, and the tardy discovery of the fault committed in passing it. The little confidence in Law remaining was now radically extinguished; not an atom of it could ever be set afloat again. Seditious writings and analytical and reasonable pamphlets rained on all sides, and the consternation was general.

The Parliament assembled on Monday, the 27th of May, in the morning, and named certain of its members to go to M. le Duc d'Orléans, with remonstrances against the decree. About noon of the same day, M. le Duc d'Orléans sent La Vrillière to say to the Parliament that he revoked that decree, and that the notes would remain as before. La Vrillière, finding that the Parliament had adjourned, went to the Chief-President, to say with what he was charged. After

dinner the Parliamentary deputies came to the Palais Royal, where they were well received; M. le Duc d'Orléans confirmed what they had already heard from La Vrillière, and said to them that he would re-establish the funds of the Hôtel de Ville at two-and-a-half per-cent. The deputies expected that in justice and in goodness he ought to raise them to at least three per cent. M. le Duc d'Orléans answered, that he should like not only to raise them to three, but to four, nay five per cent.; but that the state of affairs would not permit him to go beyond two-and-a-half. On the next day was published the counter-decree, which placed the shares and actions as they were before the 22nd of May. The decree of that date was therefore revoked in six days, after having caused such a strange effect.

On Wednesday, the 29th, a pretty little comedy was played. Le Blanc, Secretary of State, went to Law, told him that M. le Duc d'Orléans discharged him from his office as comptroller-general of the finances, thanked him for the attention he had given to it, and announced that as many people in Paris did not like him, a meritorious officer should keep guard in his house to prevent any accident that might happen to him. At the same time, Benzualde, major of the regiment of Swiss guards, arrived with sixteen of his men to remain night and day in Law's house.

The Scotchman did not in the least expect this dismissal or this guard, but he appeared very tranquil respecting both, and maintained his usual coolness. The next day he was taken by the Duc de la Force to the Palais Royal. Then comedy number two was played. M. le Duc d'Orléans refused to see the financier, who went away without an interview. On the day after, however, Law was admitted by the back stairs, closeted with the Regent, and was treated by him as well as ever. The comedies were over.

On Sunday, the 2nd of June, Benzualde and his Swiss withdrew from Law's house. Stock-jobbing was banished at the same time from the Rue Quincampoix, and established in the Place Vendôme. In this latter place there was more room for it. The passers-by were not incommoded. Yet some people did not find it as convenient as the other. At this time the King gave up to the bank one hundred million of shares he had in it.

On the 5th July, a decree of the Council was issued, prohibiting people from possessing jewels, from keeping them locked up, or from selling them to foreigners. It may be imagined what a commotion ensued. This decree was grafted upon a number of others, the object of all, too visibly, being to seize upon all coin, in favour of the discredited paper, in which nobody could any longer have the slightest confidence. In vain M. le Duc d'Orléans, M. le Duc, and his mother, tried to persuade others, by getting rid of their immense stores of jewels, that is to say, by sending them abroad on a journey—nothing more: not a person was duped by this example; not a person omitted to conceal his jewels very carefully: a thing much more easy to accomplish than the concealment of gold or silver coin, on account of the smaller value of precious stones. This jewellery eclipse was not of long duration.

CHAPTER CI

IMMEDIATELY after the issue of this decree an edict was drawn up for the establishment of an Indian commercial company, which was to undertake to reimburse in a year six hundred millions of bank notes, by paying fifty thousand dollars per month. Such was the last resource of Law and his system. For the juggling tricks of the Mississippi, it was found necessary to substitute something real; especially since the edict of the 22nd of May, so celebrated and so disastrous for the paper. Chimeras were replaced by realities—by a true India Company; and it was this name and this thing which succeeded, which took the place of the undertaking previously known as the Mississippi. It was in vain that the tobacco monopoly and a number of other immense monopolies were given to the new company; they could not enable it to meet the proper claims spread among the public, no matter what trouble might be taken to diminish them at all hazard and at all loss.

It was now necessary to seek other expedients. None could be found except that of rendering this company a commercial one; this was, under a gentler name, a name vague and unpretending, to hand over to it the entire and exclusive commerce of the country. It may be imagined how such a resolution was received by the public, exasperated by the severe decree, prohibiting people, under heavy penalties, from having more than five-hundred livres, in coin, in their possession, subjecting them to visits of inspection, and

leaving them nothing but bank notes to pay for the commonest necessaries of daily life. Two things resulted; first, fury, which day by day was so embittered by the difficulty of obtaining money for daily subsistence, that it was a marvel all Paris did not revolt at once, and that the émeute was appeased; second, the Parliament, taking its stand upon this public emotion, held firm to the end in refusing to register the edict instituting the new company.

On the 15th of July, the Chancellor showed in his own house the draught of the edict to deputies from the Parliament, who remained with him until nine o'clock at night, without being persuaded. On the morrow, the 16th, the edict was brought forward in the Regency Council. M. le Duc d'Orléans, sustained by M. le Duc, spoke well upon it, because he could not speak ill, however bad his theme. Nobody said a word, and all bowed their necks. It was resolved, in this manner, to send the edict to the Parliament on the morrow, the 17th of July.

That same 17th of July, there was such a crowd in the morning, at the bank and in the neighbouring streets, for the purpose of obtaining enough money to go to market with, that ten or twelve people were stifled. Three of the bodies were tumultuously carried to the Palais Royal, which the people, with loud cries, wished to enter. A detachment of the King's guards at the Tuileries was promptly sent there. La Vrillière and Le Blanc separately harangued the people. The lieutenant of police came; brigades of the watch were sent for. The dead bodies were afterwards carried away, and by gentleness and cajoleries the people were at length dispersed. The detachment of the King's guards returned to the Tuileries. By about ten o'clock in the morning, all being over, Law took it into his head to go to the Palais Royal. He

received many imprecations as he passed through the streets. M. le Duc d'Orléans thought it would be well not to let him leave the Palais Royal, and gave him a lodging there. He sent back Law's carriage, however, the windows of which were smashed on the way by the stones thrown at them. Law's house, too, was attacked, amid much breaking of windows. All this was known so late in our quarter of the Jacobins of the Saint-Dominique, that when I arrived at the Palais Royal there was not a vestige visible of any disturbance. M. le Duc d'Orléans, in the midst of a very small company, was very tranquil, and showed that you would not please him unless you were so also. I did not stop long, having nothing to do or say.

This same morning the edict was carried to the Parliament, which refused to register it, and sent a deputation to M. le Duc d'Orléans with its reasons for this, at which the Regent was much vexed. The next morning an ordonnance of the King was pasted all over the town, prohibiting the people, under heavy penalties, to assemble, and announcing that in consequence of the disturbances which had taken place the previous day at the bank, that establishment would remain closed until further notice, and no more money would be paid by it. Luck supplied the place of prudence; for people knew not how they were to live in the meanwhile, yet no fresh disturbance occurred—a fact which shows the goodness and obedience of the people, subjected to so many and to such strange trials. Troops, however, were collected at Charenton, who were at work upon the canal of Montargis: some regiments of cavalry and of dragoons were stationed at Saint-Denis, and the King's regiment was posted upon the heights of Chaillot. Money was sent to Gonesse to induce the bakers to come as usual, and for fear they should refuse bank notes, like the Paris

workmen and shopkeepers, nearly all of whom would no longer receive any paper, the regiment of the guards had orders to hold itself ready, and the musketeers to keep within their quarters, their horses saddled and bridled.

As for the Parliament, M. le Duc d'Orléans determined to punish its disobedience by sending it to Blois. This resolution was carried in full council. The Regent hoped that the Parliamentary men, accustomed to the comfort of their Paris homes, and to the society there of their wives, children, and friends, would soon grow tired of being separated from them, and of the extra expense they would be put to, and would give in. I agreed to the project, although I saw, alas! that by this exile the Parliament would be punished, but would be neither conciliated nor tamed into submission. To make matters worse, Blois was given up, and Pontoise was substituted for it! This latter town being close to Paris, the chastisement became ridiculous, showed the vacillating weakness of the Regent, and encouraged the Parliament to laugh at him. One thing was, however, well done. The resolution taken to banish the Parliament was kept so secret that that assembly had not the slightest knowledge of it.

On Sunday, the 21st of July, squadrons of the guards, with officers at their head, took possession, at four o'clock in the morning, of all the doors of the Palais de Justice. The musketeers seized at the same time upon the doors of the Grand Chamber, whilst others invaded the house of the Chief-President, who was in much fear during the first hour. Other musketeers went in parties of four to all the officers of the Parliament, and served them with the King's order, commanding them to repair to Pontoise within twice twenty-four hours. All passed off very politely on both sides, so that there was not the slightest com-

plaint: several members obeyed the same day and went to Pontoise.

Rather late in the evening M. le Duc d'Orléans sent to the Attorney-General 100,000 livres in coin, and as much in bank notes of 100 livres, and of 10 livres to be given to those who should need them for the journey, but not as gifts. The Chief-President was more brazen and more fortunate; he made so many promises, showed so much meanness, employed so much roguery, that abusing by these means the feebleness and easiness of the Regent, whom he laughed at, he obtained more than 100,000 écus for his expenses. The poor prince gave him the money, under the rose, in two or three different payments, and permitted the Duc de Bouillon to lend him his house at Pontoise, completely furnished, and the garden of which, on the banks of the river, is admirable and immense, a masterpiece of its kind, and had been the delight of Cardinal Bouillon, being perhaps the only thing in France he regretted. With such fine assistance the Chief-President—on bad terms with his companions, who had openly despised him for some time—perfectly made it up with them. He kept at Pontoise open table for the Parliament; all were every day at liberty to use it if they liked, so that there were always several tables, all equally, delicately, and splendidly served. He sent, too, to those who asked for them, liquors, etc., as they could desire. Cooling drinks and fruits of all kinds were abundantly served every afternoon, and there were a number of little one- and two-horse vehicles always ready for the ladies and old men who liked a drive, besides play-tables in the apartments until supper time. The result of all this magnificence was, as I have said, that the Chief-President completely reinstated himself in the good graces of his companions; but it was at the expense of the Regent,

who was laughed at for his pains. A large number of the members of the Parliament did not go to Pontoise at all, but took advantage of the occasion to recreate themselves in the country. Only a few of the younger members mounted guard in the assembly, where nothing but the most trivial and make-believe business was conducted. Everything important was deliberately neglected. Woe! to those, therefore, who had any trial on hand. The Parliament, in a word, did nothing but divert itself, leave all business untouched, and laugh at the Regent and the government. Banishment to Pontoise was a fine punishment!

This banishment of the Parliament to Pontoise was followed by various financial operations and by several changes in the administrations. Des Forts had the general control of the finances and all authority, but without the name. The disordered state of the exchequer did not hinder M. le Duc d'Orléans from indulging in his strange liberalities to people without merit and without need, and not one of whom he could possibly care a straw for. He gave to Madame la Grande Duchesse an augmentation of her pension of 50,000 livres; one of 8,000 livres to Trudaine; one of 9,000 livres to Chateauneuf; one of 8,000 livres to Bontems, chief *valet de chambre* of the King; one of 6,000 livres to the Maréchal de Montesquieu; one of 3,000 livres to Faucault; and one of 9,000 livres to the widow of the Duc d'Albemarle, secretly remarried to the son of Mahoni!

All this time the public stock-jobbing still continued on the Place Vendôme. The Mississippi had tempted everybody. It was who should fill his pockets first with millions, through M. le Duc d'Orléans and Law. The crowd was very great. One day the Maréchal de Villars traversed the Place Vendôme in a fine coach, loaded with pages and lackeys, to make way for which

the mob of stock-jobbers had some difficulty. The Maréchal upon this harangued the people in his braggart manner from the carriage window, crying out against the iniquity of stock-jobbing, and the shame it cast upon all. Until this point he had been allowed to say on, but when he thought fit to add that his own hands were clean, and that he had never dabbled in shares, a voice uttered a cutting sarcasm, and all the crowd took up the word, at which the Maréchal, ashamed and confounded, despite his ordinary authority, buried himself in his carriage and finished his journey across the Place Vendôme at a gentle trot in the midst of a hue and cry, which followed him even beyond, and which diverted Paris at his expense for several days, nobody pitying him.

At last it was found that this stock-jobbing too much embarrassed the Place Vendôme and the public way; it was transferred, therefore, to the vast garden of the Hôtel de Soissons. This was, in fact, its proper place. Law, who had remained at the Palais Royal some time, had returned to his own house, where he received many visits. The King several times went to see the troops that had been stationed near Paris; after this they were sent away again. Those which had formed a little camp at Charenton, returned to Montargis to work at the canal making there.

Law, for commercial reasons, had some time ago caused Marseilles to be made a free port. The consequence of this was that an abundance of vessels came there, especially vessels from the Levant, and from want of precautions the plague came also, lasted a long while, desolated the town, province, and the neighbouring provinces. The care and precautions afterwards taken restrained it as much as possible, but did not hinder it from lasting a long time, or from creating frightful disorders. These details are

so well known that they can be dispensed with here.

I have a few more words to say of Law and his Mississippi. The bubble finally burst at the end of the year (1720). Law, who had no more resources, being obliged secretly to depart from the realm, was sacrificed to the public. His flight was known only through the eldest son of Argenson, intendant at Maubeuge, who had the stupidity to arrest him. The courier he despatched with the news was immediately sent back, with a strong reprimand for not having deferred to the passport with which Law had been furnished by the Regent. The financier was with his son, and they both went to Brussels where the Marquis de Prié, Governor of the Imperial Low Countries, received them very well, and entertained them. Law did not stop long, gained Liège and Germany, where he offered his talents to several princes, who all thanked him; nothing more. After having thus roamed, he passed through the Tyrol, visited several Italian courts, not one of which would have him, and at last retired to Venice. This republic, however, did not employ him. His wife and daughter followed him some time after. I don't know what became of them or of the son.

Law was a Scotchman; of very doubtful birth; tall and well made; of agreeable face and aspect; gallant, and on very good terms with the ladies of all the countries he had travelled in. His wife was not his wife; she was of a good English family and well connected; had followed Law for love; had had a son and a daughter by him, passed for his wife, and bore his name without being married to him. This was suspected towards the end; after his departure it became certain. She had one eye and the top of one cheek covered by an ugly stain as of wine; otherwise

she was well made, proud, impertinent in her conversation and in her manners, receiving compliments, giving next to none, paying but few visits, these rare and selected, and exercising authority in her household. I know not whether her credit over her husband was great; but he appeared full of regard, of care, and of respect for her; at the time of their departure they were each about fifty and fifty-five years old. Law had made many acquisitions of all kinds and still more debts, so that this tangle is not yet unravelled by the committee of the council appointed to arrange his affairs with his creditors. I have said elsewhere, and I repeat it here, that there was neither avarice nor roguery in his composition. He was a gentle, good, respectable man, whom excess of credit and fortune had not spoiled, and whose deportment, equipages, table, and furniture could not scandalise any one. He suffered with singular patience and constancy all the vexations excited by his operations, until towards the last, when, finding himself short of means and wishing to meet his difficulty, he became quick and bad-tempered, and his replies were often ill-measured. He was a man of system, of calculation, of comparison, well and profoundly instructed in these things, and, without ever cheating, had everywhere gained at play by dint of understanding—which seems to me incredible—the combinations of cards.

His bank, as I have elsewhere said, was an excellent thing for a republic, or for a country like England, where finance is as in a republic. His Mississippi he was the dupe of, and believed with good faith he should make great and rich establishments in America. He reasoned like an Englishman, and did not know how opposed to commerce and to such establishments are the frivolity of the (French) nation, its inexperience, its avidity to enrich itself at once, the incon-

venience of a despotic government, which meddles with everything, which has little or no consistency, and in which what one minister does is always destroyed by his successor.

Law's proscription of specie, then of jewels, so as to have only paper in France, is a system I have never comprehended, nor has anybody, I fancy, during all the ages which have elapsed since that in which Abraham, after losing Sarah, bought, for ready-money, a sepulchre for her and for her children. But Law was a man of system, and of system so deep, that nobody ever could get to the bottom of it, though he spoke easily, well and clearly, but with a good deal of English in his French.

He remained several years at Venice, upon very scanty means, and died there a Catholic, having lived decently, but very humbly, wisely, and modestly, and received with piety the last sacraments of the Church.

Thus terminates all I have to say of Law. But a painful truth remains. I have to speak of the woful disorder in the finances which his system led to,—disorder which was not fully known until after his departure from France. Then people saw, at last, where all the golden schemes that had flooded upon popular credulity had borne us;—not to the smiling and fertile shores of Prosperity and Confidence, as may be imagined; but to the bleak rocks and dangerous sands of Ruin and Mistrust, where dull clouds obscure the sky, and where there is no protection against the storm.

CHAPTER CII

NOT long after the flight of Law, that is to say, on Sunday, the 24th of January, of the new year, 1721, a council was held at the Tuileries, at four o'clock in the afternoon, principally for the purpose of examining the state of the finances and of Law's Bank and India Company. It was, in fact, high time to do something to diminish the overgrown disorder and confusion everywhere reigning. For some time there had been complete stagnation in all financial matters; the credit of the King had step by step diminished, private fortune had become more and more uncertain. The bag was at last empty, the cards were cast aside, the last trick was played. The administration of the finances had passed into the hands of La Houssaye, and his first act was to call the attention of the Regency Council to the position of the bank and the company. We were prepared to hear that things were in a very bad state, but we were scarcely prepared to find that they so closely resembled utter ruin and bankruptcy.

I need not relate all that passed at this council; the substance of it is enough. From the statement there of M. le Duc d'Orléans, it appeared that Law had issued 1,200,000,000 livres of bank notes more than he ought to have issued. The first 600,000,000 livres had not done much harm, because they had been kept locked up in the bank; but after the 22nd of May, another issue of 600,000,000 had taken place, and been circulated among the public, without the knowledge of the Regent, without the authorisation of any de-

cree. "For this," said M. le Duc d'Orléans, "Law deserved to be hanged, but under the circumstances of the case, I drew him from his embarrassment, by an ante-dated decree, ordering the issue of this quantity of notes."

Thereupon M. le Duc said to the Regent, "But, Monsieur, why, knowing this, did you allow him to leave the realm?"

"It was you who furnished him with the means to do so," replied M. le Duc d'Orléans.

"I never asked you to allow him to quit the country," rejoined M. le Duc.

"But," insisted the Regent, "it was you yourself who sent him his passports."

"That's true," replied M. le Duc, "but it was you who gave them to me to send to him; but I never asked you for them, or to let him leave the realm. I know that I have the credit for it amongst the public, and I am glad of this opportunity to explain here the facts of the case. I was against the proposition for sending M. Law to the Bastille, or to any other prison, because I believed that it was not to your interest to sanction this, after having made use of him as you had; but I never asked you to let him leave the realm, and I beg you, Monsieur, in presence of the King, and before all these gentlemen, to say if I ever did."

"'Tis true," replied the Regent, "you never asked me; I allowed him to go, because I thought his presence in France would injure public credit, and the operations of the public."

"So far was I from asking you," said M. le Duc, "that if you had done me the honour to demand my opinion, I should have advised you to take good care not to let him depart from the country."

This strange conversation, which roused our astonishment to an incredible point, and which was sus-

tained with so much out-spoken freedom by M. le Duc, demands a word or two of explanation.

M. le Duc was one of those who, without spending a farthing, had drawn millions from Law's notes and shares. He had had large allotments of the latter, and now that they had become utterly valueless, he had been obliged to make the best of a bad bargain, by voluntarily giving them up, in order to lighten the real responsibilities of the Company. This he had done at the commencement of the Council, M. le Prince de Conti also. But let me explain at greater length.

The 22nd of May, the day of the decree, was the period at which commenced the final decay of the Company, and of the bank, and the extinction of all confidence by the sad discovery that there was no longer any money wherewith to pay the bank notes, they being so prodigiously in excess of the coin. After this, each step had been but a stumble: each operation a very feeble palliation. Days and weeks had been gained, obscurity had been allowed to give more chance, solely from fear of disclosing the true and terrible state of affairs, and the extent of the public ruin. Law could not wash his hands of all this before the world; he could not avoid passing for the inventor and instrument, and he would have run great risk at the moment when all was unveiled. M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, to satisfy his own prodigality, and the prodigious avidity of his friends, had compelled Law to issue so many millions of livres of notes more than he had any means of paying, and who had thus precipitated him into the abyss, could not let him run the chance of perishing, still less to save him, could he proclaim himself the real criminal. It was to extricate himself from this embarrassment that he made Law leave the country, when he saw that the monstrous deceit could no longer be hidden.

This manifestation, which so strongly interested the shareholders, and the holders of bank notes, especially those who had received shares or notes as favours due to their authority, and who could show no other title to them, threw every one into despair. The most important holders, such as the Princes of the Blood, and others, whose profits had been immense, had by force or industry delayed this manifestation as long as possible. As they knew the real state of affairs, they felt that the moment all the world knew it also, their gains would cease, and their paper become worthless, —that paper from which they had drawn so much, and which had not cost them a farthing! This is what induced M. le Duc d'Orléans to hide from them the day of this manifestation, so as to avoid being importuned by them; and by a surprise, to take from them the power of preparing any opposition to the measures it was proposed to carry out. M. le Duc, when he learned this, flew into a fury, and hence the strange scene between him and M. le Duc d'Orléans, which scandalised and terrified everybody in the Council.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, from taste, and afterwards from necessity, lived upon schemes and trickery, thought he had done marvels in saddling M. le Duc with the passport of Law. He wished to lay the blame of Law's departure upon M. le Duc; but as I have shown, he was defeated by his own weapons. He had to do with a man as sharp as himself. M. le Duc, who knew he had nothing to fear, would not allow it to be supposed that he had sanctioned the flight of the financier. That was why he pressed M. le Duc d'Orléans so pitilessly, and forced him to admit that he had never asked him to allow Law to leave the country.

The great and terrible fact brought out by this Council was, that Law, without the knowledge or authority

of the Regent, had issued and disseminated among the public 600,000,000 livres of notes; and not only without being authorised by any edict, but contrary to express prohibition. But when the Regent announced this, who did he suppose would credit it? Who could believe that Law would have had the hardihood to issue notes at this rate without the sanction and approbation of his master?

However, to leave once and for all these unpleasant matters, let me say what was resolved upon by way of remedy to the embarrassments discovered to exist. The junction of the India Company with the bank, which had taken place during the previous February, had led to transactions which made the former debtor to the latter to an immense amount. But the bank being a governmental establishment, the King became thus the creditor of the Company. It was decreed, in fact, that the Company should be considered as debtor to the King. It was decided, however, that other debtors should receive first attention. Many private people had invested their money in the shares of the Company. It was not thought just that by the debt of the Company to the King, these people should be ruined; or, on the other hand, that those who had left the Company in good time, who had converted their shares into notes, or who had bought them at a low price in the market, should profit by the misfortune of the *bonâ fide* shareholders. Accordingly, commissioners, it was decided, were to be named, to liquidate all these papers and parchments, and annul those which did not proceed from real purchases.

M. le Duc said, upon this, "There are at least eighty thousand families, the whole of whose wealth consists of these effects; how are they to live during this liquidation?"

La Houssaye replied, that so many commissioners could be named, that the work would soon be done.

And so the Council ended.

But I must, perforce, retrace my steps at this point to many other matters, which I have left far behind me in going on at once to the end of this financial labyrinth. And first let me tell what happened to that monstrous personage, Alberoni, how he fell from the lofty pinnacle of power on which he had placed himself, and lost all consideration and all importance in the fall. The story is mightily curious and instructive.

CHAPTER CIII

ALBERONI had made himself detested by all Europe,—for all Europe, in one way or another, was the victim of his crimes. He was detested as the absolute master of Spain, whose guides were perfidy, ambition, personal interest, views always oblique, often caprice, sometimes madness; and whose selfish desires, varied and diversified according to the fantasy of the moment, were hidden under schemes always uncertain and oftentimes impossible of execution. Accustomed to keep the King and Queen of Spain in chains, and in the narrowest and obscurest prison, where he allowed them to communicate with no one, and made them see, feel, and breathe through him, and blindly obey his every wish; he caused all Spain to tremble, and had annihilated all power there, except his own, by the most violent acts, constraining himself in no way, despising his master and his mistress, whose will and whose authority he had utterly absorbed. He braved successively all the powers of Europe, and aspired to nothing less than to deceive them all, then to govern them, making them serve all his ends; and seeing at last his cunning exhausted, tried to execute alone, and without allies, the plan he had formed.

This plan was nothing less than to take away from the Emperor all that the peace of Utrecht had left him in Italy; all that the Spanish house of Austria had possessed there; to dominate the Pope and the King of Sicily; to deprive the Emperor of the help of France and England, by exciting the first against the Regent

through the schemes of the ambassador Cellamare and the Duc du Maine; and by sending King James to England, by the aid of the North, so as to keep King George occupied with a civil war. In the end he wished to profit by all these disorders, by transporting into Italy (which his cardinalship made him regard as a safe asylum against all reverses) the immense treasures he had pillaged and collected in Spain, under pretext of sending the sums necessary to sustain the war, and the conquests he intended to make; and this last project was, perhaps, the motive power of all the rest. The madness of these schemes, and his obstinacy in clinging to them, were not discovered until afterwards. The astonishment then was great indeed, upon discovering the poverty of the resources with which he thought himself capable of carrying out these wild projects. Yet he had made such prodigious preparations for war, that he had entirely exhausted the country without rendering it able for a moment to oppose the powers of Europe.

Alberoni, abhorred in Spain as a cruel tyrant, in France, in England, in Rome, and by the Emperor as an implacable and personal enemy, did not seem to have the slightest uneasiness. Yet he might have had some, and with good cause, at the very moment when he fancied himself most powerful and most secure.

The Regent and the Abbé Dubois, who for a long time had only too many reasons to regard Alberoni as their personal enemy, were unceasingly occupied in silently plotting his fall; they believed the present moment favourable, and did not fail to profit by it. How they did so is a curious fact, which, to my great regret, has never reached me. M. le Duc d'Orléans survived Dubois such a few months that many things I should have liked to have gained information upon, I had not the time to ask him about; and this was one.

All I know is, that what Alberoni always dreaded, at last happened to him. He trembled at every one, no matter of how little importance, who arrived from Parma (the Queen of Spain, it has not been forgotten, was of that Duchy); he omitted nothing by the aid of the Duke of Parma, and by other means, to hinder the Parmesans from coming to Madrid; and was in terror of the few of those whose journey he could not hinder, and whose dismissal he could not obtain.

Among these few people there was nobody he feared so much as the Queen's nurse, whom he drew up with a round turn occasionally, so to speak, but less from policy than ill-temper. This nurse, who was a rough countrywoman of Parma, was named Donna Piscatori Laura. She had arrived in Spain some years after the Queen, who had always liked her, and who made her, shortly after her arrival, her *assofeta,* that is to say, her chief *femme de chambre,* an office more considerable in Spain than with us. Laura had brought her husband with her, a peasant in every way, seen and known by nobody; but Laura had intelligence, shrewdness, cleverness, and ambitious views, in spite of the external vulgarity of her manners, which she had preserved either from habit, or from policy, to make herself less suspected. Like all persons of this extraction, she was thoroughly selfish. She was not unaware how impatiently Alberoni endured her presence, and feared her favour with the Queen, whom he wished to possess alone; and, more sensible to the gentle taps she from time to time received from him, than to his ordinary attentions, she looked upon him simply as a very formidable enemy, who kept her within very narrow limits, who hindered her from profiting by the favour of the Queen, and whose design was to send her back to Parma, and to leave nothing undone until he had carried it out.

This is all the information I have ever been able to obtain. The probability is, that Donna Laura was gained by the money of the Regent and the intrigues of Dubois; and that she succeeded in convincing the Queen of Spain that Alberoni was a minister who had ruined the country, who was the sole obstacle in the way of peace, and who had sacrificed everything and everybody to his personal views, their Catholic Majesties included. However, as I relate only what I know, I shall be very brief upon this interesting event.

Laura succeeded. Alberoni, at the moment he least expected it, received a note from the King of Spain ordering him to withdraw at once, without attempting to see him or the Queen, or to write to them; and to leave Spain in twice twenty-four hours! An officer of the guards was to accompany him until his departure. How this overruling order was received, and what the Cardinal did, I know not; I only know that he obeyed it, and took the road for Arragon. So few precautions had been taken, that he carried off an immense number of papers, money, and jewels; and it was not until a few days had elapsed, that the King of Spain was informed that the original will of Charles the Second could not be found. It was at once supposed that Alberoni had carried away this precious document (by which Charles the Second named Philippe V. King of Spain), in order to offer it, perhaps, to the Emperor, so as to gain his favour and good graces. Alberoni was stopped. It was not without trouble, the most terrible menaces, and loud cries from him, that he surrendered the testament, and some other important papers which it was perceived were missing. The terror he had inspired was so profound, that, until this moment, no one had dared to show his joy, or to speak, though the tyrant was gone. But this event reassured every one against his return, and the re-

sult was an unexampled overflow of delight, of imprecations, and of reports against him, to the King and Queen, of the most public occurrences (which they alone were ignorant of) and of private misdeeds, which it was no longer thought necessary to hide.

M. le Duc d'Orléans did not restrain his joy, still less the Abbé Dubois; it was their work which had overthrown their personal enemy; with him fell the wall of separation, so firmly erected by Alberoni between the Regent and the King of Spain; and (at the same time) the sole obstacle against peace. This last reason caused joy to burst out in Italy, in Vienna, in London; and peace between France and Spain soon resulted.

The allied princes felicitated themselves on what had happened; even the Dutch were ravished to be delivered of a minister so double-dealing, so impetuous, so powerful. M. le Duc d'Orléans dispatched the Chevalier de Morcieu, a very skilful and intelligent man, and certainly in the hands of the Abbé Dubois, to the extreme confines of the frontiers to wait for Alberoni, accompanying him until the moment of his embarkation in Provence for Italy; with orders never to lose sight of him, to make him avoid the large towns and principal places as much as possible; suffer no honours to be rendered to him; above all, to hinder him from communicating with anybody, or anybody with him; in a word, to conduct him civilly, like a prisoner under guard.

Morcieu executed to the letter this disagreeable commission; all the more necessary, because, entirely disgraced as was Alberoni, everything was to be forced from him while traversing a great part of France, where all who were adverse to the Regent might have recourse to him. Therefore it was not without good reason that every kind of liberty was denied him.

It may be imagined what was suffered by a man so impetuous, and so accustomed to unlimited power; but he succeeded in accommodating himself to such a great and sudden change of condition; in maintaining his self-possession; in subjecting himself to no refusals; in being sage and measured in his manners; very reserved in speech, with an air as though he cared for nothing; and in adapting himself to everything without questions, without pretension, without complaining, dissimulating everything, and untiringly pretending to regard Morcieu as an accompaniment of honour. He received, then, no sort of civility on the part of the Regent, of Dubois, or of anybody; and performed the day's journeys, arranged by Morcieu, without stopping, almost without suite, until he arrived on the shores of the Mediterranean, where he immediately embarked and passed to the Genoa coast.

Alberoni, delivered of his Argus, and arrived in Italy, found himself in another trouble by the anger of the Emperor, who would suffer him nowhere, and by the indignation of the Court of Rome, which prevailed, on this occasion, over respect for the purple. Alberoni for a long time was forced to keep out of the way, hidden and a fugitive, and was not able to approach Rome until the death of the Pope. The remainder of the life of this most extraordinary man is not a subject for these memoirs. But what ought not to be forgotten is the last mark of rage, despair, and madness that he gave in traversing France. He wrote to M. le Duc d'Orléans, offering to supply him with the means of making a most dangerous war against Spain; and at Marseilles, ready to embark, he again wrote to reiterate the same offers, and press them on the Regent.

I cannot refrain from commenting here upon the blindness of allowing ecclesiastics to meddle with pub-

lic affairs; above all, cardinals, whose special privilege is immunity from everything most infamous and most degrading. Ingratitude, infidelity, revolt, felony, independence, are the chief characteristics of these eminent criminals.

Of Alberoni's latter days I will say but a few words.

At the death of Clement XI., legal proceedings that had been taken to deprive Alberoni of his cardinalship, came to an end. Wandering and hidden in Italy, he was summoned to attend a conclave for the purpose of electing a new Pope. Alberoni was the opprobrium of the sacred college; proceedings, as I have said, were in progress to deprive him of his cardinalship. The King and Queen of Spain evidently stimulated those proceedings: the Pope just dead had opposed him; but the cardinals would not agree to his disgrace; they would not consent to strip him of his dignity. The example would have been too dangerous. That a cardinal, prince, or great nobleman, should surrender his hat in order to marry, the store of his house demands it; well and good; but to see a cardinal deprive himself of his hat by way of penitence, is what his brethren will not endure. A cardinal may be poisoned, stabbed, got rid of altogether, but lose his dignity he never can. Rome must be infallible, or she is nothing.

It was decided, that if, at the election of the new Pope, Alberoni were not admitted to take part in the proceedings, he always might protest against them, and declare them irregular. Therefore he was, as I have said, admitted to the conclave. He arrived in Rome, without display, in his own coach, and was received in the conclave with the same honours as all the other cardinals, and performed all the duties of his position.

A few days after the election, he absented himself from Rome, as though to see whether proceedings

would be continued against him. But they fell of themselves. The new Pope had no interest in them. The cardinals wished only for silence. Spain felt at last the inutility of her cries. Dubois was in favour of throwing a veil over his former crimes, so that, after a short absence, Alberoni hired in Rome a magnificent palace, and returned there for good, with the attendance, expense, and display his Spanish spoils supplied. He found himself face to face with the Cardinal Giudice, and with Madame des Ursins. The three formed a rare triangle, which caused many a singular scene in Rome. After seeing them both die, Alberoni became legate at Ferrara, continued there a long time, little esteemed at Rome, where he is now living, sound in mind and body, and eighty-six years of age.

CHAPTER CIV

THE King attended the Royal Council for the first time on Sunday, the 18th of February, 1720. He said nothing while there, or on going away, excepting that when M. le Duc d'Orléans, who feared he might grow weary of the proceedings, proposed to him to leave, he said he would stop to the end. After this he did not come always, but often, invariably remaining to the last, without moving or speaking. His presence changed nothing in the order of our arrangements, because his armchair was always there, alone, at the end of the table, and M. le Duc d'Orléans, whether his Majesty came or not, had but a "stool" similar to those we all sat upon. Step by step this council had been so much increased, that now, by the entry of the Duc de Berwick, it numbered sixteen members! To say truth, we were far too many, and we had several among us who would have been much better away. I had tried, but in vain, to make the Regent see this. He did see at last, but it was too late; and meanwhile we were, as I have stated, sixteen in the council. I remember that one day, when the King came, a kitten followed him, and some time after jumped upon him, and thence upon the table, where it began to walk; the Duc de Noailles immediately crying out, because he did not like cats. M. le Duc d'Orléans wished to drive the animal away. I smiled, and said, "Oh, leave the kitten alone, it will make the seventeenth."

M. le Duc d'Orléans burst out laughing at this, and looked at the company, who laughed also, the King as

well. His Majesty briefly spoke of it to me on the morrow, as though appreciating the joke, which, by the way, immediately ran over all Paris.

The Abbé Dubois still maintained his pernicious influence over the Regent, and still looked forward to a cardinalship as the reward of his scheming, his baseness, and his perfidy. In the meantime, the Archbishopric of Cambrai became vacant (by the death, at Rome, of the Cardinal Trémoille). That is to say, the richest archbishopric, and one of the best posts in the Church. The Abbé Dubois was only tonsured; 150,000 livres a year tempted him, and perhaps this position, from which he could more easily elevate himself to the cardinalship. Impudent as he might be, powerful as might be the empire he had acquired over his master, he was much embarrassed, and masked his effrontery under a trick. He said to M. le Duc d'Orléans, he had a pleasant dream; and related to him that he had dreamt he was Archbishop of Cambrai! The Regent, who smelt the rat, turned on his heel, and said nothing. Dubois, more and more embarrassed, stammered, and paraphrased his dream; then, re-assuring himself by an effort, asked, in an off-hand manner, why he should not obtain it, His Royal Highness, by his will alone, being able thus to make his fortune.

M. le Duc d'Orléans was indignant, even terrified, little scrupulous as he might be as to the choice of bishops, and in a tone of contempt replied to Dubois, "What, *you* Archbishop of Cambrai!" making him thus feel his low origin, and still more the debauchery and scandal of his life. Dubois was, however, too far advanced to stop on the road, and cited examples; unfortunately these were only too many.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, less touched by such bad reasoning than embarrassed how to resist the ardour of a

man whom for a long time he had not dared to contradict, tried to get out of the difficulty, by saying, "But you being such a scoundrel, where will you find another to consecrate you?"

"Oh, if it's only that!" exclaimed Dubois, "the thing is done. I know very well who will consecrate me; he is not far from here."

"And who the devil is he who will dare to do so?" asked the Regent.

"Would you like to know?" replied the Abbé, "and does the matter rest only upon that?"

"Well, who?" said the Regent.

"Your chief chaplain," replied Dubois, "who is close at hand. Nothing will please him better; I will run and speak to him."

And thereupon he embraces the knees of M. le Duc d'Orléans (who, caught thus in his own trap, had not the strength to refuse), runs to the Bishop of Nantes, says that he is to have Cambrai, begs the Bishop to consecrate him, and receives his promise to do so, returns, wheels round, tells M. le Duc d'Orléans that his chief chaplain has agreed to the consecration; thanks, praises, admires the Regent, fixes more and more firmly the office by regarding it as settled, and by persuading M. le Duc d'Orléans, who dares not say no;—and in this manner was Dubois made Archbishop of Cambrai!

The extreme scandal of this nomination caused a strange stir. Impudent as was the Abbé Dubois, he was extremely embarrassed; and M. le Duc d'Orléans so much ashamed, that it was soon remarked he was humbled if you spoke to him upon the subject. The next question was, from whom Dubois was to receive holy orders? The Cardinal de Noailles was applied to, but he stoutly refused to assist in any way. It may be imagined what an affront this was to Dubois. He

never in his life pardoned the Cardinal, who was nevertheless universally applauded for his refusal. But the Abbé Dubois was not a man to be daunted by an ordinary obstacle; he turned his glances elsewhere, and soon went through all the formalities necessary.

The very day he took orders there was a Regency Council at the old Louvre, because the measles, which were then very prevalent, even in the Palais Royal, hindered us from meeting as usual in the Tuileries. A Regency Council without the Abbé Dubois present was a thing to marvel at, and yet his arrival to-day caused even more surprise than his absence would have caused. But he was not a man to waste his time in thanksgiving for what had just happened to him. This was a new scandal, which revived and aggravated the first. Everybody had arrived in the cabinet of the council, M. le Duc d'Orléans also; we were scattered about and standing. I was in a corner of the lower end, when I saw Dubois enter in a stout coat, with his ordinary bearing. We did not expect him on such a day, and naturally enough cried out surprised. M. le Prince de Conti, with his father's sneering manner, spoke to the Abbé Dubois, on his appearance among us on the very day of taking orders, and expressed his surprise at it with the most pathetic malignity imaginable.

Dubois, who had not had time to reply one word, let him say to the end; then coldly observed, that if he had been a little more familiar with ancient history, he would not have found what astonished him very strange, since he (the Abbé) had only followed the example of Saint-Ambrose, whose ordination he began to relate. I did not wait for his recital; at the mere mention of Saint-Ambrose I flew to the other end of the cabinet, horror-struck at the comparison Dubois had just made, and fearing lest I should be tempted to

say to him, that the ordination of Saint-Ambrose had been forced upon him in spite of his resistance. This impious citation of Saint-Ambrose ran all over the town with the effect that may be imagined. The nomination and this ordination took place towards the end of February.

I will finish at once all that relates to this matter, so as not to separate it, or have to return to it. Dubois had his bulls at the commencement of May, and the consecration was fixed for Sunday the 9th of June. All Paris and the Court were invited to it, myself excepted. I was on bad terms with Dubois, because I in no way spared him when with M. le Duc d'Orléans. He on his side, fearing the power I had over the Regent, the liberty I enjoyed with him, and the freedom with which I spoke to him, did as much as he could to injure me, and to weaken the confidence of M. le Duc d'Orléans in me. Dubois and I continued, nevertheless, to be on good terms with each other in appearance, but it was in appearance only.

This consecration was to be magnificent, and M. le Duc d'Orléans was to be present at it. If the nomination and the ordination of the Abbé Dubois had caused much stir, scandal, and horror, the superb preparations for the consecration caused even more. Great was the indignation against M. le Duc d'Orléans. I went, therefore, to him the evening before this strange ceremony was to take place, to beg him not to attend it. I represented to him that the nomination and ordination of the Abbé Dubois had created the most frightful effect upon the public, and that the consecration of a man of such low extraction, and whose manners and mode of life were so notorious, would create more. I added, that if he attended this ceremony, people would say it was simply for the purpose of mocking God, and insulting His Church; that

the effect of this would be terrible, and always much to be feared; and that people would say the Abbé Dubois abused the mastery he had over him, and that this new evidence of dependence would draw down upon him hatred, disdain, and shame, the results of which were to be dreaded. I concluded by saying, that I spoke to him as his disinterested servitor; that his absence or his presence at this consecration would change in nothing the fortune of the Abbé Dubois, who would be Archbishop of Cambrai all the same without prostituting his master in the eyes of all France, and of all Europe, by compelling him to be guilty of a measure to which it would be seen he had been urged by force. I conjured him not to go; and to show him on what terms I was with the Abbé Dubois, I explained to him I was the sole man of rank he had not invited to his consecration; but that, notwithstanding this circumstance, if he would give me his word that he would not go, I on my side would agree to go, though my horror at doing so would be very great.

My discourse, pronounced with warmth and developed with freedom, was listened to from beginning to end. I was surprised to hear the Regent say I was right, but I opened my eyes very wide when he embraced me, said that I spoke like a true friend, and that he would give me his word, and stick to it, he would not go. We parted upon this, I strengthening him in his resolution, promising anew I would go, and he thanking me for this effort. He showed no impatience, no desire that I should go; for I knew him well, and I examined him to the very bottom of his soul, and quitted him much pleased at having turned him from a measure so disgraceful and so extraordinary. Who could have guessed that he would not keep his word? But so it happened.

Although as I have said I felt sure of him, yet the

extreme weakness of this prince, and the empire the Abbé Dubois had acquired over him, induced me to be quite certain of him before going to the consecration. I sent therefore the next morning to the Palais Royal to inquire after M. le Duc d'Orléans, keeping my carriage all ready for a start. But I was much confused, accustomed as I might be to his miserable vacillation, to hear from the person I had sent, that he had just seen the Regent jump into his coach, surrounded by all the pomp usual on grand occasions, and set out for the consecration. I had my horses put up at once, and locked myself into my cabinet.

A day or two after I learnt from a friend of Madame de Parabère, then the reigning Sultana, but not a faithful one, that M. le Duc d'Orléans had been with her the previous night, and had spoken to her in praise of me, saying he would not go to the ceremony, and that he was very grateful to me for having dissuaded him from going. La Parabère praised me, admitted I was right, but her conclusion was that he would go.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, surprised, said to her she was then mad.

"Be it so," replied she, "but you will go."

"But I tell you I will not go," he rejoined.

"Yes, yes, I tell you," said she; "you will go."

"But," replied he, "this is admirable. You say M. de Saint-Simon is quite right, why then should I go?"

"Because I wish it," said she.

"Very good," replied he, "and why do you wish I should go—what madness is this?"

"I wish it because——," said she.

"Oh, because," replied he, "that's no reason; say why you wish it."

(After some dispute) "You obstinately desire then to know? Are you not aware that the Abbé Dubois and I quarreled four days ago, and that we have not

yet made it up. He mixes in everything. He will know that you have been with me to-night. If to-morrow you do not go to his consecration, he will not fail to believe it is I who have hindered you; nothing will take this idea out of his head; he will never pardon me; he will undermine in a hundred ways my credit with you, and finish by embroiling us. But I don't wish such a thing to happen, and for that reason you must go to his consecration, although M. de Saint-Simon is right."

Thereupon ensued a feeble debate, then resolution and promise to go, which was very faithfully kept.

As for me I could only deplore the feebleness of the Regent, to whom I never afterwards spoke of this consecration, or he to me; but he was very much ashamed of himself, and much embarrassed with me afterwards. I do not know whether he carried his weakness so far as to tell Dubois what I had said to hinder him from going to the ceremony or whether the Abbé was told by La Parabère, who thought thus to take credit to herself for having changed the determination of M. le Duc d'Orléans, and to show her credit over him. But Dubois was perfectly informed of it, and never pardoned me.

The Val de Grace was chosen for the consecration as being a royal monastery, the most magnificent of Paris, and the most singular church. It was superbly decorated; all France was invited, and nobody dared to stop away or to be out of sight during the whole ceremony.

There were tribunes with blinds prepared for the ambassadors and Protestant ministers. There was another more magnificent for M. le Duc d'Orléans and M. le Duc de Chartres, whom he took there. There were places for the ladies, and as M. le Duc d'Orléans entered by the monastery, and his tribune was within,

it was open to all comers, so that outside and inside were filled with refreshments of all kinds, which officers distributed in profusion. This disorder continued all day, on account of the large number of tables that were served without and within for the subordinate people of the fête and all who liked to thrust themselves in. The chief gentlemen of the chamber of M. le Duc d'Orléans and his chief officers did the business of the ceremony, placed distinguished people in their seats, received them, conducted them, and other of his officers paid similar attentions to less considerable people, while all the watch and all the police were occupied in looking after the arrival and departure of the carriages in proper and regular order.

During the consecration, which was but little decent as far as the consecrated and the spectators were concerned, above all when leaving the building, M. le Duc d'Orléans evinced his satisfaction at finding so many considerable people present, and then went away to Asnières to dine with Madame Parabère—very glad that a ceremony was over upon which he had bestowed only indirect attention, from the commencement to the end. All the prelates, the distinguished Abbés, and a considerable number of the laity, were invited during the consecration by the chief officers of M. le Duc d'Orléans to dine at the Palais Royal. The same officers did the honours of the feast, which was served with the most splendid abundance and delicacy. There were two services of thirty covers each, in a large room of the grand suite of apartments, filled with the most considerable people of Paris, and several other tables equally well served in adjoining rooms for people less distinguished. M. le Duc d'Orléans gave to the new Archbishop a diamond of great price to serve him as a ring.

All this day was given up to that sort of triumph which draws down neither the approbation of man nor the blessing of God. I saw nothing of it all, however, and M. le Duc d'Orléans and I never spoke of it.

The Comte de Horn had been in Paris for the last two months, leading an obscure life of gaming and debauchery. He was a man of two-and-twenty, tall and well made, of that ancient and grand family of Horn, known in the eleventh century among the little dynasties of the Low Countries, and afterwards by a long series of illustrious generations. The Comte de Horn in question had been made captain in the Austrian army, less on account of his youth than because he was such an ill-behaved dog, causing vast trouble to his mother and brother. They heard so much of the disorderly life he was leading in Paris, that they sent there a confidential gentleman with money to pay his debts, to try and persuade him to return, and failing in this, to implore the authority of the Regent (to whom, through Madame, the Horns were related), in order to compel him to do so. As ill-luck would have it, this gentleman arrived the day after the Comte had committed the crime I am about to relate.

On Friday, the 22nd of March, 1720, he went to the Rue Quincampoix, wishing, he said, to buy 100,000 écus worth of shares, and for that purpose made an appointment with a stock-broker in a cabaret. The stock-broker came there with his pocket-book and his shares; the Comte de Horn came also, accompanied, as he said, by two of his friends; a moment after, they all three threw themselves upon this unfortunate stock-broker; the Comte de Horn stabbed him several times with a poniard, and seized his pocket-book; one of his pretended friends (a Piedmontese named Mille), seeing that the stock-broker was not dead, finished the

work. At the noise they made the people of the house came, not sufficiently quick to prevent the murder, but in time to render themselves masters of the assassins, and to arrest them. In the midst of the scuffle, the other cut-throat escaped, but the Comte de Horn and Mille were not so fortunate. The cabaret people sent for the officers of justice, who conducted the criminals to the Conciergerie. This horrible crime, committed in broad daylight, immediately made an immense stir, and several kinsmen of this illustrious family at once went to M. le Duc d'Orléans to beg for mercy; but the Regent avoided speaking to them as much as possible, and very rightly ordered full and prompt justice to be done.

At last, the relatives of Horn penetrated to the Regent: they tried to make the Count pass for mad, saying even that he had an uncle confined in an asylum, and begging that he might be confined also. But the reply was, that madmen who carried their madness to fury could not be got rid of too quickly. Repulsed in this manner, they represented what an infamy it would be to their illustrious family, related to nearly all the sovereigns of Europe, to have one of its members tried and condemned. M. le Duc d'Orléans replied that the infamy was in the crime, and not in the punishment. They pressed him upon the honour the family had in being related to him. "Very well, gentlemen," said he, "I will divide the shame with you."

The trial was neither long nor difficult. Law and the Abbé Dubois, so interested in the safety of the stock-jobbers (without whom the paper must have fallen at once), supported M. le Duc d'Orléans might and main, in order to render him inexorable, and he, to avoid the persecutions he unceasingly experienced on the other side, left nothing undone in order to hurry the Parliament into a decision; the affair, there-

fore, went full speed, and it seemed likely that the Comte de Horn would be broken on the wheel.

The relatives, no longer hoping to save the criminal, thought only of obtaining a commutation of the sentence. Some of them came to me, asking me to save them: though I was not related to the Horn family, they explained to me, that death on the wheel would throw into despair all that family, and everybody connected with it in the Low Countries, and in Germany, because in those parts there was a great and important difference between the punishments of persons of quality who had committed crimes; that decapitation in no way influenced the family of the decapitated, but that death on the wheel threw such infamy upon it, that the uncles, aunts, brothers, and sisters, and the three next generations, were excluded from entering into any noble chapter, which, in addition to the shame, was a very injurious deprivation, annihilating the family's chance of ecclesiastic preferment; this reason touched me, and I promised to do my best with M. le Duc d'Orléans to obtain a commutation of the sentence.

I was going off to La Ferté to profit by the leisure of Holy Week. I went therefore to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and explained to him what I had just learnt. I said that after the detestable crime the Comte de Horn had committed, every one must feel that he was worthy of death; but that every one could not admit it was necessary to break him on the wheel, in order to satisfy the ends of justice. I showed him how the family would suffer if this sentence were carried out, and I concluded by proposing to the Regent a *mezzo termine,* such as he was so fond of.

I suggested that the decree ordering death by the wheel should be pronounced. That another decree should at the same time be prepared and kept ready

signed and sealed, with only a date to fill in, revoking the first, and changing the punishment into decapitation. That at the last moment this second decree should be produced, and immediately afterwards the head of the Comte de Horn be cut off. M. le Duc d'Orléans offered no objection, but consented at once to my plan. I said to him, by way of conclusion, that I was going to set out the next day, and that I begged him not to be shaken in the determination he had just formed, by the entreaties of Dubois or Law, both of whom were strongly in favour of punishment by the wheel. He assured me he would keep firm; reiterated the assurance; I took leave of him; and the next day went to La Ferté.

He was firm, however, in his usual manner. Dubois and Law besieged him, and led the attack so well that he gave in, and the first thing I learnt at La Ferté was that the Comte de Horn had been broken alive on the wheel at the Grève, on Holy Friday, the 26th March, 1720, about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and the scoundrel Mille with him on the same scaffold, after having both suffered torture.

The result of this was as I anticipated. The Horn family and all the grand nobility of the Low Countries, many of Germany, were outraged, and contained themselves neither in words nor in writings. Some of them even talked of strange vengeance, and a long time after the death of M. le Duc d'Orléans, I met with certain of the gentlemen upon whose hearts the memory of this punishment still weighed heavily.

CHAPTER CV

FOR a long time a species of war had been declared between the King of England and his son, the Prince of Wales, which had caused much scandal; and which had enlisted the Court on one side, and made much stir in the Parliament. George had more than once broken out with indecency against his son; he had long since driven him from the palace, and would not see him. He had so cut down his income that he could scarcely subsist. The father never could endure this son, because he did not believe him to be his own. He had more than suspected the Duchess, his wife, to be in relations with Count Königsmarck. He surprised him one morning leaving her chamber; threw him into a hot oven, and shut up his wife in a château for the rest of her days.

The Prince of Wales, who found himself ill-treated for a cause of which he was personally innocent, had always borne with impatience the presence of his mother and the aversion of his father. The Princess of Wales, who had much sense, intelligence, grace, and art, had softened things as much as possible; and the King was unable to refuse her his esteem, or avoid loving her. She had conciliated all England; and her Court, always large, boasted of the presence of the most accredited and the most distinguished persons. The Prince of Wales feeling his strength, no longer studied his father, and blamed the ministers with words that at least alarmed them. They feared the credit of the Princess of Wales; feared lest they should be attacked by the Parliament, which often

indulges in this pleasure. These considerations became more and more pressing as they discovered what was brewing against them; plans such as would necessarily have rebounded upon the King. They communicated their fears to him, and indeed tried to make it up with his son, on certain conditions, through the medium of the Princess of Wales, who, on her side, felt all the consciousness of sustaining a party against the King, and who always had sincerely desired peace in the royal family. She profited by this conjuncture; made use of the ascendency she had over her husband, and the reconciliation was concluded. The King gave a large sum to the Prince of Wales, and consented to see him. The ministers were saved, and all appeared forgotten.

The excess to which things had been carried between father and son had not only kept the entire nation attentive to the intestine disorders ready to arise, but had made a great stir all over Europe; each power tried to blow this fire into a blaze, or to stifle it according as interest suggested. The Archbishop of Cambrai, whom I shall continue to call the Abbé Dubois, was just then very anxiously looking out for his cardinal's hat, which he was to obtain through the favour of England, acting upon that of the Emperor with the Court of Rome. Dubois, overjoyed at the reconciliation which had taken place, wished to show this in a striking manner, in order to pay his court to the King of England. He named, therefore, the Duc de la Force to go to England, and compliment King George on the happy event that had occurred.

The demonstration of joy that had been resolved on in France was soon known in England. George, annoyed by the stir that his domestic squabbles had made throughout all Europe, did not wish to see it prolonged by the sensation that this solemn envoy would

cause. He begged the Regent, therefore, not to send him one. As the scheme had been determined on only in order to please him, the journey of the Duc de la Force was abandoned almost as soon as declared. Dubois had the double credit, with the King of England, of having arranged this demonstration of joy, and of giving it up; in both cases solely for the purpose of pleasing his Britannic Majesty.

Towards the end of this year, 1720, the Duc de Brissac married Mlle. Pecoil, a very rich heiress, whose father was a maître des requêtes, and whose mother was daughter of Le Gendre, a very wealthy merchant of Rouen. The father of Mlle. Pecoil was a citizen of Lyons, a wholesale dealer, and extremely avaricious. He had a large iron safe, or strong-box, filled with money, in a cellar, shut in by an iron door, with a secret lock, and to arrive at which other doors had to be passed through. He disappeared so long one day, that his wife and two or three valets or servants that he had sought him everywhere. They well knew that he had a hiding-place, because they had sometimes seen him descending into his cellar, flat-candlestick in hand, but no one had ever dared to follow him.

Wondering what had become of him, they descended to the cellar, broke open the doors, and found at last the iron one. They were obliged to send for workmen to break it open, by attacking the wall in which it was fixed. After much labour they entered, and found the old miser dead in his strong-box, the secret spring of which he had apparently not been able to find, after having locked himself in; a horrible end in every respect.

The Brissacs have not been very particular in their alliances for some time, and yet appear no richer. The gold flies away; the dross remains.

I had almost forgotten to say that in the last day of this year, 1720, a Prince of Wales was born at Rome.

The Prince was immediately baptised by the Bishop of Montefiascone, and named Charles. The event caused a great stir in the Holy City. The Pope sent his compliments to their Britannic Majesties, and forwarded to the King of England (the Pretender) 10,000 Roman crowns, gave him, for his life, a country house at Albano, which until then, he had only lent him, and 2000 crowns to furnish it. A *Te Deum* was sung in the chapel of the Pope, in his presence, and there were rejoicings at Rome. When the Queen of England was able to see company, Cardinal Tanora came in state, as representative of the Sacred College, to congratulate her.

The birth of the Prince also made much stir at the Court of England, and among the priests and Jacobites of that country. For very different reasons, not only the Catholics and Protestants, enemies of the government, were ravished at it, but nearly all the three realms showed as much joy as they dared; not from any attachment to the dethroned house, but for the satisfaction of seeing a line continue with which they could always menace and oppose their kings and the royal family.

In France we were afraid to show any public feeling upon the event. We were too much in the hands of England; the Regent and Dubois too much the humble servants of the house of Hanover; Dubois especially, waiting, as he was, so anxiously for his cardinal's hat. He did not, as will be seen, have to wait much longer.

The new Pope had given, in writing, a promise to Dubois, that if elected to the chair of St. Peter he would make him cardinal. Time had flown, and the promise was not yet fulfilled. The impatience of

Dubois increased with his hopes, and gave him no repose. He was much bewildered when he learnt that, on the 16th of June, 1721, the Pope had elevated to the cardinalship his brother, who for ten years had been Bishop of Terracine and Benedictine monk of Mount Cassini. Dubois had expected that no promotion would be made in which he was not included. But here was a promotion of a single person only. He was furious; this fury did not last long, however; a month after, that is to say, on the 16th of July, the Pope made him cardinal with Dion Alexander Alboni, nephew of the deceased Pope, and brother of the Cardinal Camarlingue.

Dubois received the news and the compliment that followed with extreme joy, but managed to contain himself with some little decency, and to give all the honour of his nomination to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, sooth to say, had had scarcely anything to do with it. But he could not prevent himself from saying to everybody that what honoured him more than the Roman purple was the unanimous eagerness of all the European powers to procure him this distinction; to press the Pope to award it; to desire that his promotion would be hastened without waiting for their nominations. He incessantly blew these reports about everywhere without ever being out of breath; but nobody was the dupe of them.

Shortly after this, that is, on the last day of July, the King, who had until then been in perfect health, woke with headache and pain in the throat; shivering followed, and towards afternoon, the pains in the head and throat being augmented, he went to bed. I repaired the next day about twelve to inquire after him. I found he had passed a bad night, and that within the last two hours he had grown worse. I saw everywhere consternation. I had the *grandes entrées,*

therefore I went into his chamber. I found it very empty. M. le Duc d'Orléans, seated in the chimney corner, looked exceedingly downcast and solitary. I approached him for a moment, then I went to the King's bed. At this moment Boulduc, one of the apothecaries, gave him something to take. The Duchesse de la Ferté, who, through the Duchesse de Ventadour, her sister, had all the *entrées* as godmother to the King, was at the heels of Boulduc, and turning round to see who was approaching, saw me, and immediately said in a tone neither high nor low, "He is poisoned! he is poisoned!"

"Hold your tongue, Madame," said I. "This is terrible."

But she kept on, and spoke so loudly that I feared the King would hear her. Boulduc and I looked at each other, and I immediately withdrew from the bed and from this mad woman, with whom I was in no way familiar. During this illness, which lasted only five days (but of which the first three were violent) I was much troubled, but at the same time I was exceedingly glad that I had refused to be the King's governor, though the Regent had over and over again pressed me to accept the office. There were too many evil reports in circulation against M. le Duc d'Orléans for me to dream of filling this position. For was I not his bosom friend—known to have been on the most intimate terms with him ever since his childhood—and if anything had happened to excite new suspicions against him, what would not have been said? The thought of this so troubled me during the King's illness, that I used to wake in the night with a start, and, oh, what joy was mine when I remembered that I had not this duty on my head!

The malady, as I have said, was not long, and the convalescence was prompt, which restored tranquillity

and joy, and caused an overflow of *Te Deums* and rejoicing. Helvetius had all the honour of the cure; the doctors had lost their heads, he preserved his, and obstinately proposed bleeding at the foot, at a consultation at which M. le Duc d'Orléans was present: his advice prevailed, change for the better immediately took place, cure soon after.

The Maréchal de Villeroy (the King's governor) did not let slip this occasion for showing all his venom and his baseness; he forgot nothing, left nothing undone in order to fix suspicion upon M. le Duc d'Orléans, and thus pay his court to the robe. No magistrate, however unimportant, could come to the Tuileries whom he did not himself go to with the news of the King and caresses; whilst to the first nobles he was inaccessible. The magistrates of higher standing he allowed to enter at all times into the King's chamber, even to stand by his bed in order to see him, while they who had the *grandes entrées* with difficulty enjoyed a similar privilege.

He did the same during the first days of convalescence, which he prolonged as much as possible, in order to give the same distinction to the magistrates, come at what time they might, and privately to the great people of the Court and the ambassadors. He fancied himself a tribune of the people, and aspired to their favour and their dangerous power. From this he turned to other affectations which had the same aim against M. le Duc d'Orléans. He multiplied the *Te Deums* that he induced the various ranks of petty officers of the King to have sung on different days and in different churches; he attended all, took with him as many people as he could, and for six weeks continued this game. A *Te Deum* was sung in every church in Paris. He spoke of nothing else, and above the real joy he felt at the King's recovery, he put on a

false one which had a party smell about it, and which avowed designs not to be mistaken.

The King went in state to Nôtre Dame and Saint Géneviève to thank God. These mummeries, thus prolonged, extended to the end of August and the fête Saint-Louis. Each year there is on that day a concert in the garden. The Maréchal de Villeroy took care that on this occasion, the concert should become a species of fête, to which he added a display of fireworks. Less than this would have been enough to draw the crowd. It was so great that a pin could not have fallen to the ground through the mass of people wedged against each other in the garden. The windows of the Tuileries were ornamented, and were filled with people. All the roofs of the Carrousel, as well as the Place, were covered with spectators.

The Maréchal de Villeroy was in his element, and importuned the King, who tried to hide himself in the corners at every moment. The Maréchal took him by the arm, and led him, now to the windows where he could see the Carrousel, and the houses covered with people; now to those which looked upon the garden, full of the innumerable crowd waiting for the fête. Everybody cried *Vive le Roi!* when he appeared, but had not the Maréchal detained him, he would have run away and hid himself.

"Look, my master," the Maréchal would say, "all that crowd, all these people are yours, all belong to you; you are the master of them: look at them a little therefore, to please them, for they are all yours, they are all devoted to you."

A nice lesson this for a governor to give to a young King, repeating it every time he leads him to the windows, so fearful is he lest the boy-sovereign shall forget it! I do not know whether he received similar lessons from those who had the charge of his educa-

tion. At last the Maréchal led him upon the terrace, where, beneath a daïs, he heard the end of the concert, and afterwards saw the fireworks. The lesson of the Maréchal de Villeroy, so often and so publicly repeated, made much stir, and threw but little honour upon him. He himself experienced the first effect of his fine instruction.

M. le Duc d'Orléans conducted himself in a manner so simple, so prudent, that he infinitely gained by it. His cares and his reasonable anxiety were measured; there was much reserve in his conversation, an exact and sustained attention in his language, and in his countenance, which allowed nothing to escape him, and which showed as little as possible that he was the successor to the crown; above all, he never gave cause for people to believe that he thought the King's illness more or less serious than it was, or that his hopes were stronger than his fears.

He could not but feel that in a conjuncture so critical, all eyes were fixed upon him, and as in truth he never wished for the crown (however unlikely the statement may seem), he had no need to constrain himself in any way, but simply to be measured in his bearing. His conduct was, in fact, much remarked, and the cabal opposed to him entirely reduced to silence. Nobody spoke to him upon the event that might happen, not even his most familiar friends and acquaintances, myself included; and at this he was much pleased. He acted entirely upon the suggestions of his own good sense.

This was not the first time, let me add, that the Maréchal de Villeroy, in his capacity of governor of the King, had tacitly insulted M. le Duc d'Orléans. He always, in fact, affected, in the discharge of his duties, a degree of care, vigilance, and scrutiny, the object of which was evident. He was particularly

watchful of the food of the King, taking it up with his own hands, and making a great show of this precaution; as though the King could not have been poisoned a thousand times over in spite of such ridiculous care. 'Twas because M. le Duc d'Orléans was vexed with this childish behaviour, so calculated to do him great injury, that he wished me to supersede the Maréchal de Villeroy as governor of the King. This, as before said, I would never consent to. As for the Maréchal, his absurdities met with their just reward, but at a date I have not yet come to.

CHAPTER CVI

BEFORE this illness of the King, that is to say, at the commencement of June, I went one day to work with M. le Duc d'Orléans, and found him alone, walking up and down the grand apartment.

"Holloa! there," said he, as soon as he saw me; then, taking me by the hand, "I cannot leave you in ignorance of a thing which I desire above all others, which is of the utmost importance to me, and which will cause you as much joy as me; but you must keep it profoundly secret." Then bursting out laughing, "If M. de Cambrai knew that I had told it to you, he would never pardon me." And he proceeded to state that perfect reconciliation had been established between himself and the King and Queen of Spain; that arrangements had been made by which our young King was to marry the Infanta of Spain, as soon as he should be old enough; and the Prince of the Asturias (the heir to the Spanish throne) was to marry Mademoiselle de Chartres, the Regent's daughter.

If my joy at this was great, my astonishment was even greater; M. le Duc d'Orléans embraced me, and the first surprise over, I asked him how he had contrived to bring about these marriages; above all, that of his daughter. He replied that it had all been done in a trice by the Abbé Dubois, who was a regular devil when once he had set his mind upon anything; that the King of Spain had been transported at the idea of the King of France marrying the Infanta; and that the marriage of the Prince of the Asturias had been the *sine quâ non* of the other.

After we had well talked over the matter and rejoiced thereon, I said to the Regent that the proposed marriage of his daughter must be kept profoundly secret until the moment of her departure for Spain; and that of the King also, until the time for their execution arrived; so as to prevent the jealousy of all Europe. At this union, so grand and so intimate, of the two branches of the royal family, such a union having always been the terror of Europe and disunion the object of all its policy—this policy having only too well succeeded—I urged that the sovereigns must be left as long as possible in the confidence they had acquired, the Infanta above all, being but three years old (she was born at Madrid on the morning of the 30th of March, 1718), by which means the fears of Europe upon the marriage of Mademoiselle de Chartres with the Prince of the Asturias would be coloured—the Prince could wait, he having been born in August, 1707, and being accordingly only fourteen years of age. "You are quite right," replied M. le Duc d'Orléans, "but this can't be, because in Spain they wish to make public the declarations of marriage at once, indeed, as soon as the demand is made and the declaration can be signed."

"What madness!" cried I; "what end can this tocsin have except to arouse all Europe and put it in movement! They must be made to understand this, and we must stick to it; nothing is so important."

"All this is true," said M. le Duc d'Orléans. "I think exactly like you, but they are obstinate in Spain; they have wished matters to be arranged thus, and their wishes have been agreed to. Everything is arranged, fixed, finished. I am so much interested in the matter that you surely would not have advised me to break off for this condition."

I said of course not, shrugging my shoulders at this unseasonable impatience.

During the discussion which followed, I did not forget to think of myself, the occasion being so opportune for making the fortunes of my second son. I remembered then, that as matters were advanced to this point, a special ambassador must be sent to Spain, to ask the hand of the Infanta for the King, and to sign the compact of marriage; that the ambassador must be a nobleman of mark and title, and thus I begged the Duke to give me this commission, with a recommendation to the King of Spain, so as to make my second son, the Marquis of Ruffec, grandee of Spain.

M. le Duc d'Orléans scarcely allowed me to finish, immediately accorded me what I had asked, promised me the recommendation with many expressions of friendship, and asked me to keep the whole matter secret, and make no preparation that would disclose it.

I knew well enough why he enjoined me to secrecy. He wished to have the time to make Dubois swallow this pill. My thanks expressed, I asked him two favours; first, not to pay me as an ambassador, but to give me a round sum sufficient to provide for all my expenses without ruining myself; second, not to entrust any business to me which might necessitate a long stay in Spain, inasmuch as I did not wish to quit him, and wanted to go to Spain simply for the purpose of obtaining the honour above alluded to for my second son. The fact is, I feared that Dubois, not being able to hinder my embassy, might keep me in Spain in a sort of exile, under pretence of business, in order to get rid of me altogether. Events proved that my precaution was not altogether useless.

M. le Duc d'Orléans accorded both the favours I asked, with many obliging remarks, and a hope that

my absence would not be long. I thought I had then done great things for my family, and went home much pleased. But, mon Dieu! what are the projects and the successes of men!

Dubois, as I expected, was vexed beyond measure at my embassy, and resolved to ruin me and throw me into disgrace. I was prepared for this, and I soon saw it was so. At first, I received from him nothing but professions of friendship and of attachment for me, congratulations that M. le Duc d'Orléans had accorded to me an embassy my merit deserved, and which would be productive of such useful results for my children. He took care, however, in the midst of these fine phrases, to introduce not one word upon my arrangements, so that he might be able to drive me into a corner at the last moment, and cause me all the inconvenience possible. He slipped through my hands like an eel until the moment for my departure drew near. As he saw it approach, he began to preach to me of magnificence, and wished to enter into details respecting my suite. I described it to him, and everybody else would have been satisfied, but as his design was to ruin me, he cried out against it, and augmented it by a third. I represented to him the excessive expense this augmentation would cause, the state of the finances, the loss upon the exchange: his sole reply was that the dignity of the King necessitated this expense and show; and that his Majesty would bear the charge. I spoke to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who listened to me with attention, but being persuaded by the Cardinal, held the same language.

This point settled, the Cardinal must needs know how many coats I should take, and how many I should give to my sons:—in a word, there was not a single detail of table or stable that he did not enter into, and that he did not double. My friends exhorted me not

to be obstinate with a man so impetuous, so dangerous, so completely in possession of M. le Duc d'Orléans, pointing out to me that when once I was away he might profit by my absence, and that, meanwhile, everything relating to my embassy must pass through his hands. All this was only too true. I was obliged, therefore, to yield, although I felt that, once embarked, the King's purse would be spared at the expense of mine.

As soon as the marriages were declared, I asked to be declared as ambassador, so that I might openly make my preparations, which, it will be remembered, I had been forbidden to do. Now that there was no secret about the marriages, I fancied there need be no secret as to the ambassador by whom they were to be conducted. I was deceived. Whatever I might allege, the prohibition remained. The Cardinal wished to put me to double the necessary expense, by compelling me to have my liveries, dresses, etc., made in the utmost precipitation; and this happened. He thought, too, I should not be able to provide myself with everything in time; and that he might represent this to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and in Spain, as a fault, and excite envious cries against me.

Nevertheless, I did not choose to press him to announce my embassy, at the same time trying to obtain from him the instructions I was to receive, and which, passing through him and the Regent alone, told nothing to the public, as my preparations would have done. But I could not obtain them. Dubois carelessly replied to me, that in one or two conversations the matter would be exhausted. He wished me to know nothing, except vaguely; to leave no time for reflection, for questions, for explanations; and to throw me thus into embarrassments, and to cause me to commit blunders which he intended to make the most of.

At last, tired of so many and such dangerous postponements, I went on Tuesday, the 23rd of September, to M. le Duc d'Orléans, arranging my visit so that it took place when he was in his apartments at the Tuileries; there I spoke with such effect, that he said I had only to show myself to the King. He led me to his Majesty at once, and there and then my embassy was announced. Upon leaving the King's cabinet, M. le Duc d'Orléans made me jump into his coach, which was waiting for him, and took me to the Palais Royal, where we began to speak seriously upon the affairs of my embassy.

I fancy that Cardinal Dubois was much annoyed at what had been done, and that he would have liked to postpone the declaration yet a little longer. But this now was impossible. The next day people were sent to work upon my equipments, the Cardinal showing as much eagerness and impatience respecting them, as he had before shown apathy and indifference. He urged on the workmen; must needs see each livery and each coat as it was finished; increased the magnificence of each; and had all my coats and those of my children sent to him. At last, the hurry to make me set out was so great, that such of the things as were ready he sent on by rapid conveyance to Bayonne, at a cost by no means trifling to me.

The Cardinal next examined the list of persons I intended to have with me, and approved it. To my extreme surprise he said, however, that I must add forty officers of cavalry and infantry, from the regiments of my sons. I cried out against the madness and the expense of such a numerous military accompaniment. I represented that it was not usual for ambassadors, with a peaceful mission, to take with them such an imposing force by way of escort; I showed that these officers, being necessarily gay men,

might be led away into indiscreet gallantries, which would give me more trouble than all the business of my embassy. Nothing could be more evident, true, and reasonable than my representations, nothing more useless or worse received.

The Cardinal had resolved to ruin me, and to leave me in Spain with all the embarrassment, business, and annoyances he could. He rightly thought that nothing was more likely to make him succeed than to charge me with forty officers. Not finding them, I took only twenty-nine, and if the Cardinal succeeded as far as concerned my purse, I was so fortunate, and these gentlemen were so discreet, that he succeeded in no other way.

Let me add here, before I give the details of my journey to Spain, in what manner the announcement of these two marriages was received by the King and the public.

His Majesty was by no means gratified when he heard that a wife had been provided for him. At the first mention of marriage he burst out crying. The Regent, M. le Duc, and M. de Fréjus, had all the trouble in the world to extract a "yes" from him, and to induce him to attend the Regency Council, in which it was necessary that he should announce his consent to the proposed union, or be present while it was announced for him. The council was held, and the King came to it, his eyes swollen and red, and his look very serious.

Some moments of silence passed, during which M. le Duc d'Orléans threw his eyes over all the company (who appeared deeply expectant), and then fixed them on the King, and asked if he might announce to the council the marriage of his Majesty. The King replied by a dry "yes," and in a rather low tone, but which was heard by the four or five people on each side

of him, and the Regent immediately announced the marriage. Then, after taking the opinions of the council, which were for the most part favorable, he turned towards the King with a smiling air, as though inviting him to assume the same, and said, "There, then, Sire, your marriage is approved and passed, and a grand and fortunate matter finished." The council then broke up.

The news of what had taken place immediately ran over all Paris. The Tuileries and the Palais Royal were soon filled with people who came to present themselves before the King to compliment him and the Regent on the conclusion of this grand marriage, and the crowd continued the following days. The King had much difficulty in assuming some little gaiety the first day, but on the morrow he was less sombre, and by degrees he quite recovered himself.

M. le Duc d'Orléans took care not to announce the marriage of his daughter with the Prince of the Asturias at the same time that the other marriage was announced. He declared it, however, the next day, and the news was received with the utmost internal vexation by the cabal opposed to him. Men, women, people of all conditions who belonged to that cabal, lost all countenance. It was a pleasure to me, I admit, to look upon them. They were utterly disconcerted. Nevertheless, after the first few days of overthrow, they regained courage, and set to work in order to break off both the marriages.

CHAPTER CVII

I HAVE already said that Dubois looked most unfavourably upon my embassy to Spain, and that I saw he was determined to do all in his power to throw obstacles in its way. I had fresh proofs of this. First, before my departure: when he gave me my written instructions, he told me that in Spain I must take precedence of everybody during the signing of the King's contract of marriage, and at the chapel, at the two ceremonies of the marriage of the Prince of the Asturias, allowing no one to be before me!

I represented to him that the Pope's nuncio would be present, and that to him the ambassadors of France gave place everywhere, and even the ambassadors of the Emperor also, who, without opposition, preceded those of the King. He replied that that was true, except in special cases like the present, and that his instructions must be obeyed. My surprise was great at so strange an order. I tried to move him by appealing to his pride; asking him how I should manage with a cardinal, if one happened to be present, and with the majordomo-major, who corresponds, but in a very superior degree, with our grand master of France. He flew in a rage, and declared that I must precede the majordomo-major also; that there would be no difficulty in doing so; and that, as to the cardinals, I should find none. I shrugged my shoulders, and begged him to think of the matter. Instead of replying to me, he said he had forgotten to acquaint me with a most essential particular: it was, that I

must take care not to visit anybody until I had been first visited.

I replied that the visiting question had not been forgotten in my instructions, and that those instructions were to the effect that I should act in this respect as the Duc de Saint-Aignan had acted, and that the usage he had followed was to pay the first visit to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and to the Councillors of State (when there were any), who are the same as are known here under the name of ministers. Thereupon he broke out afresh, prated, talked about the dignity of the King, and did not allow me the opportunity of saying another word. I abridged my visit, therefore, and went away.

However strange might appear to me these verbal orders of such a new kind, I thought it best to speak to the Duc de Saint-Aignan and Amelot on the subject, so as to convince myself of their novelty. Both these ambassadors, as well as those who had preceded them, had visited in an exactly opposite manner; and they thought it extravagant that I should precede the nuncio, no matter where. Amelot told me, moreover, that I should suffer all sorts of annoyances, and succeed in nothing, if I refused the first visit to the Minister of Foreign Affairs; that as for the Councillors of State, they existed only in name, the office having fallen into desuetude; and that I must pay other visits to certain officers he named (three in number), who would be justly offended and piqued if I refused them what every one who had preceded me had rendered them. He added that I had better take good care to do so, unless I wished to remain alone in my house, and have the cold shoulder turned upon me by every principal person of the Court.

By this explanation of Amelot I easily comprehended the reason of these singular verbal orders. The Car-

dinal wished to secure my failure in Spain, and my disgrace in France: in Spain by making me offend at the outset all the greatest people and the minister through whose hands all my business would pass; draw upon myself thus complaints here, which, as I had no written orders to justify my conduct, he (Dubois) would completely admit the justice of, and then disavow me, declaring he had given me exactly opposite orders. If I did not execute what he had told me, I felt that he would accuse me of sacrificing the King's honour and the dignity of the Crown, in order to please in Spain, and obtain thus honours for myself and my sons, and that he would prohibit the latter to accept them. There would have been less uproar respecting the nuncio; but if I preceded him, Dubois felt persuaded that the Court of Rome would demand justice; and this justice in his hands would have been a shameful recall.

My position appeared so difficult, that I resolved to leave nothing undone in order to change it. I thought M. le Duc d'Orléans would not resist the evidence I should bring forward, in order to show the extraordinary nature of Dubois' verbal instructions. I deceived myself. It was in vain that I spoke to M. le Duc d'Orléans. I found nothing but feebleness under the yoke of a master; by which I judged how much I could hope for during my absence. Several times I argued with him and the Cardinal; but in vain. They both declared that if preceding ambassadors had paid the first visits, that was no example for me, in an embassy so solemn and distinguished as that I was about to execute. I represented that, however solemn and however distinguished might be my embassy, it gave me no rank superior to that of extraordinary ambassadors, and that I could claim none. Useless! useless! To my arguments there was no

reply, but obstinacy prevailed; and I clearly saw the extreme malignity of the valet, and the unspeakable weakness of the master. It was for me to manage as I could.

The Cardinal now began ardently to press my departure; and, in fact, there was no more time to lose. He unceasingly hurried on the workmen who were making all that I required,—vexed, perhaps, that being in such prodigious number, he could not augment them. There was nothing more for him to do but to give me the letters with which I was to be charged. He delayed writing them until the last moment previous to my departure, that is to say, the very evening before I started; the reason will soon be seen. The letters were for their Catholic Majesties, for the Queen Dowager at Bayonne, and for the Prince of the Asturias; letters from the King and from the Duc d'Orléans. But before giving them to me, the Regent said he would write two letters to the Prince of the Asturias, both alike, except in this respect, that in the one he would address the Prince as "nephew," and in the other as "brother and nephew," and that I was to try and deliver the latter, which he passionately wished; but that if I found too much difficulty in doing so, I must not persevere but deliver the former instead.

I had reason to believe that here was another plot of Dubois, to cause me trouble by embroiling me with M. le Duc d'Orléans. The Regent was the last man in the world to care for these formalities. The Prince of the Asturias was son of the King and heir to the Crown, and, in consequence, of the rank of a son of France. In whatever way regarded, M. le Duc d'Orléans was extremely inferior in rank to him; and it was something new and adventurous to treat him on terms of equality. This, however, is what I was charged with, and I believe, in the firm hope of Car-

dinal Dubois that I should fail, and that he might profit by my failure.

Finally, on the morning of the day before my departure, all the papers with which I was to be charged were brought to me. I will not give the list of them. But among these letters there was none from the King to the Infanta! I thought they had forgotten to put it with the others. I said so to the persons who brought them to me. What was my surprise when they told me that the letter was not written, but that I should have it in the course of the day!

This appeared so strange to me, that my mind was filled with suspicion. I spoke of the letter to the Cardinal and to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who assured me that I should have it in the evening. At midnight it had not arrived. I wrote to the Cardinal. Finally I set out without it. He wrote to me, saying I should receive it before arriving at Bayonne; but nothing less. I wrote him anew. He replied to me, saying that I should have it before I arrived at Madrid. A letter from the King to the Infanta was not difficult to write; I could not doubt, therefore, that there was some design in this delay. Whatever it might be, I could not understand it, unless the intention was to send the letter afterwards, and make me pass for a heedless fellow who had lost the first.

Dubois served me another most impudent turn, seven or eight days before my departure. He sent word to me, by his two devoted slaves, Le Blanc and Belleisle, that as he had the foreign affairs under his charge, he must have the post, which he would not and could not any longer do without; that he knew I was the intimate friend of Torcy (who had the post in his department), whose resignation he desired; that he begged me to write to Torcy, and send my letter to him by an express courier to Sablé (where he had

gone on an excursion); that he should see by my conduct on this occasion, and its success, in what manner he could count upon me, and that he should act towards me accordingly. To this his two slaves added all they could to persuade me to comply, assuring me that Dubois would break off my embassy if I did not do as he wished. I did not for a moment doubt, after what I had seen of the inconceivable feebleness of M. le Duc d'Orléans, that Dubois was really capable of thus affronting and thwarting me, or that I should have no aid from the Regent. At the same time I resolved to run all hazards rather than lend myself to an act of violence against a friend, so sure, so sage, and so virtuous, and who had served the state with such reputation, and deserved so well of it.

I replied therefore to these gentlemen that I thought the commission very strange, and much more so their reasoning of it; that Torcy was not a man from whom an office of this importance could be taken unless he wished to give it up; that all I could do was to ask him if he wished to resign, and if so, on what conditions; that as to exhorting him to resign, I could do nothing of the kind, although I was not ignorant of what this refusal might cost me and my embassy. They tried in vain to reason with me; all they could obtain was this firm resolution.

Castries and his brother, the Archbishop, were intimate friends of Torcy and of myself. I sent for them to come to me in the midst of the tumult of my departure. They immediately came, and I related to them what had just happened. They were more indignant at the manner and the moment, than at the thing itself; for Torcy knew that sooner or later the Cardinal would strip him of the post for his own benefit. They extremely praised my reply, exhorted me to send word to Torcy, who was on the point of depart-

ing from Sablé, or had departed, and who would make his own terms with M. le Duc d'Orléans much more advantageously, present, than absent. I read to them the letter I had written to Torcy, while waiting for them, which they much approved, and which I at once despatched.

Torcy of himself had hastened his return. My courier found him with his wife in the Parc of Versailles, having passed by the Chartres route. He read my letter, charged the courier with many compliments for me (his wife did likewise), and told me to say he would see me the next day. I informed M. Castries of his arrival. We all four met the next day. Torcy warmly appreciated my conduct, and, to his death, we lived on terms of the greatest intimacy, as may be imagined when I say that he committed to me his memoirs (these he did not write until long after the death of M. le Duc d'Orléans), with which I have connected mine. He did not seem to care for the post, if assured of an honourable pension.

I announced then his return to Dubois, saying it would be for him and M. le Duc d'Orléans to make their own terms with him, and get out of the matter in this way. Dubois, content at seeing by this that Torcy consented to resign the post, cared not how, so that the latter made his own arrangements, and all passed off with the best grace on both sides. Torcy had some money and 60,000 livres pension during life, and 20,000 for his wife after him. This was arranged before my departure and was very well carried out afterwards.

A little while after the declaration of the marriage, the Duchesse de Ventadour and Madame de Soubise, her granddaughter, had been named, the one governess of the Infanta, the other successor to the office; and they were both to go and meet her at the frontier, and

bring her to Paris to the Louvre, where she was to be lodged a little while after the declaration of my embassy: the Prince de Rohan, her son-in-law, had orders to go and make the exchange of the Princesses upon the frontier, with the people sent by the King of Spain to perform the same function. I had never had any intimacy with them, though we were not on bad terms. But these Spanish commissions caused us to visit each other with proper politeness. I forgot to say so earlier and in the proper place.

At last, viz., on the 23rd of October, 1721, I set out, having with me the Comte de Lorge, my children, the Abbé de Saint-Simon, and his brother, and many others. The rest of the company joined me at Blaye. We slept at Orléans, at Montrichard, and at Poictiers. On arriving at Conté my berline broke down. This caused a delay of three hours, and I did not arrive at Ruffec until nearly midnight. Many noblemen of the neighbourhood were waiting for me there, and I entertained them at dinner and supper during the two days I stayed. I experienced real pleasure in embracing Puy-Robert, who was lieutenant-colonel of the Royal Roussillon Regiment when I was captain.

From Ruffec I went in two days to La Cassine, a small house at four leagues from Blaye, which my father had built on the borders of his marshes of Blaye, and which I felt much pleasure in visiting; I stopped there during All Saints' Day and the evening before, and the next day I early betook myself to Blaye again, where I sojourned two days. I found several persons of quality there, many of the nobility of the country and of the adjoining provinces, and Boucher, Intendant of Bordeaux, brother-in-law of Le Blanc, who was waiting for me, and whom I entertained with good cheer morning and evening during this short stay.

We crossed to Bordeaux in the midst of such bad weather that everybody pressed me to delay the trip; but I had so few days at my command that I did not accede to their representations. Boucher had brought his brigantine magnificently equipped, and boats enough to carry over all my company, most of whom went with us. The view of the port and the town of Bordeaux surprised me, with more than three hundred ships of all nations ranged in two lines upon my passage, decked out in all their finery, and with a great noise from their cannons and those of the Château Trompette.

Bordeaux is too well known to need description at my hands: I will simply say that after Constantinople it presents the finest view of any other port. Upon landing we received many compliments, and found many carriages, which conducted us to the Intendant's house, where the Jurats came to compliment me in state dress. I invited them to supper with me, a politeness they did not expect, and which they appeared to highly appreciate. I insisted upon going to see the Hôtel de Ville, which is amazingly ugly, saying to the Jurats that it was not to satisfy my curiosity, but in order to pay a visit to them, that I went. This extremely pleased.

After thanking M. and Madame Boucher for their attention, we set out again, traversed the great Landes, and reached in due time Bayonne. The day after my arrival there, I had an audience with the Queen Dowager of Spain. I was astonished upon arriving at her house. It had only two windows in front, looked upon a little court, and had but trifling depth. The room I entered was very plainly furnished. I found the Queen, who was waiting for me, accompanied by the Duchesse de Linorez and very few other persons. I complimented her in the name of the King,

and presented to her his letter. Nothing could be more polite than her bearing towards me.

Passing the Pyrenees, I quitted with France, rain and bad weather, and found a clear sky, a charming temperature, with views and perspectives which changed at each moment, and which were not less charming. We were all mounted upon mules, the pace of which is good but easy. I turned a little out of my way to visit Loyola, famous by the birth of Saint Ignatius, and situated all alone in a narrow valley. We found there four or five Jesuits, very polite and instructed, who took care of the prodigious building erected there for more than a hundred Jesuits and numberless scholars. A church was there nearly finished, of rotunda shape, of a grandeur and size which surprised me. Gold, painting, sculpture, the richest ornaments of all kinds, are distributed everywhere with prodigality but taste. The architecture is correct and admirable, the marble is most exquisite; jasper, porphyry, lapis, polished, wreathed, and fluted columns, with their capitals and their ornaments of gilded bronze, a row of balconies between each altar with little steps of marble to ascend them, and the cage encrusted; the altars and that which accompanied them admirable. In a word, the church was one of the most superb edifices in Europe, the best kept up, and the most magnificently adorned. We took there the best chocolate I ever tasted, and, after some hours of curiosity and admiration, we regained our road.

On the 15th, we arrived at Vittoria, where I found a deputation of the province, whom I invited to supper, and the next day to breakfast. They spoke French and I was surprised to see Spaniards so gay and such good company at table. Joy on account of my journey burst out in every place through which I passed in France and Spain, and obtained for me a good re-

ception. At Salinas, among other towns which I passed through without stopping, ladies, who, to judge by their houses and by themselves, appeared to me to be quality folks, asked me with such good grace to let them see the man who was bringing happiness to Spain, that I thought it would only be proper gallantry to enter their dwellings. They appeared ravished, and I had all the trouble in the world to get rid of them, and to continue my road.

I arrived on the 18th at Burgos, where I meant to stay at least one day, to see what turn would take a rather strong fever which had seized my eldest son; but I was so pressed to hasten on that I was obliged to leave my son behind with nearly all his attendants.

I left Burgos therefore on the 19th. We found but few relays, and those ill-established. We travelled night and day without going to bed, until we reached Madrid, using such vehicles as we could obtain. I performed the last twelve leagues on a post-horse, which cost twice as much as in France. In this manner we arrived in Madrid on Friday, the 21st, at eleven o'clock at night.

We found at the entrance of the town (which has neither gates nor walls, neither barriers nor faubourgs,) people on guard, who asked us who we were, and whence we came. They had been placed there expressly so as to know the moment of my arrival. As I was much fatigued by travelling incessantly from Burgos without stopping, I replied that we were the people of the Ambassador of France, who would arrive the next day.

I learnt afterwards, that the minister had calculated that I could not reach Madrid before the 22d.

CHAPTER CVIII

EARLY the next morning I received a visit from Grimaldo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who, overjoyed at my arrival, had announced it to their Catholic Majesties before coming to me. Upon his example, apparently, the three other ministers, whom, according to usage, I ought to have visited first, came also; so that one infamous difficulty which Cardinal Dubois had placed in my path was happily overcome without effort on my part.

Grimaldo at once conducted me to the palace, and introduced me to the King. I made a profound reverence to him; he testified to me his joy at my arrival, and asked me for news of the King, of M. le Duc d'Orléans, of my journey, and of my eldest son, whom, as he knew, I had left behind at Burgos. He then entered alone into the Cabinet of the Mirrors. I was instantly surrounded by all the Court with compliments and indications of joy at the marriages and union of the crowns. Nearly all the seigneurs spoke French, and I had great difficulty in replying to their numberless compliments.

A half quarter of an hour after the King had entered his cabinet, he sent for me. I entered alone into the Hall of Mirrors, which is very vast, but much less wide than long. The King, with the Queen on his left, was nearly at the bottom of the salon,—both their Majesties standing and touching each other. I approached with three profound reverences, and I will remark, once for all, that the King never covers himself except at public audiences, and when he goes to

and comes from his mass. The audience lasted half an hour, and was principally occupied, on the part of the King and Queen, with compliments and expressions of joy at the marriages that were to take place. At its close, the Queen asked me if I would like to see the children, and conducted me to them.

I never saw prettier boys than Don Carlos and Don Ferdinand, nor a prettier babe than Don Philip. The King and Queen took pleasure in making me look at them, and in making them turn and walk before me with very good grace. Their Majesties entered afterwards into the Infanta's chamber, where I tried to exhibit as much gallantry as possible. In fact, the Infanta was charming—like a little woman—and not at all embarrassed. The Queen said to me that she already had begun to learn French, and the King that she would soon forget Spain.

"Oh!" cried the Queen, "not only Spain, but the King and me, so as to attach herself to the King, her husband, alone." Upon this I tried not to remain dumb, and to say what was appropriate. Their Majesties dismissed me with much goodness, and I was again encircled by the crowd with many compliments.

A few moments after the King recalled me, in order to see the Prince of the Asturias, who was with their Majesties in the same Hall of Mirrors. I found him tall, and really made to be painted; fine light-brown hair, light fresh-coloured complexion, long face, but agreeable; good eyes, but too near the nose. I found in him also much grace and politeness. He particularly asked after the King, M. le Duc d'Orléans, and Mademoiselle de Montpensier, to whom he was to be betrothed.

Their Catholic Majesties testified much satisfaction to me at the diligence I had used; said that a single day would be sufficient for the ceremonies that had

to be gone through (demanding the hand of the Infanta, according it, and signing the marriage contract). Afterwards they asked me when all would be ready. I replied it would be any day they pleased; because, as they wished to go into the country, I thought it would be best to throw no delay in their path. They appeared much pleased at this reply, but would not fix the day, upon which I proposed the following Tuesday. Overjoyed at this promptness, they fixed the Thursday for their departure, and left me with the best possible grace.

I had got over one difficulty, as I have shown, that connected with the first visits, but I had others yet to grapple with. And first, there was my embarrassment at finding no letter for the Infanta. I confided this fact to Grimaldo, who burst out laughing, was to have my first audience with the Infanta the next day, and it was then that the letter ought to be produced. Grimaldo said he would arrange so that when I went, the governess should come into the antechamber, and say that the Infanta was asleep, and upon offering to awake her, I should refuse to allow her, take my leave, and wait until the letter from the King arrived before I visited her again. Everything happened just as it had been planned, and thus the second obstacle which the crafty and malicious Cardinal had put in my path, for the sake of overturning me, was quietly got over. Grimaldo's kindness encouraged me to open my heart under its influence. I found that the Spanish minister knew, quite as well as I did, what manner of person Dubois was.

On Sunday, the 23rd, I had in the morning my first private audience of the King and Queen, together, in the Hall of Mirrors, which is the place where they usually give it. I was accompanied by Maulevrier, our ambassador. I presented to their Catholic Majes-

ties the Comte de Lorge, the Comte de Céreste, my second son, and the Abbé de Saint-Simon and his brother. I received many marks of goodness from the Queen in this audience.

On Tuesday, the 25th of November, I had my solemn audience. I went to the palace in a magnificent coach, belonging to the King, drawn by eight grey horses, admirably dappled. There were no postillions, and the coachman drove me, his hat under his arm. Five of my coaches filled with my suite followed, and about twenty others (belonging to noblemen of the Court, and sent by them in order to do me honour), with gentlemen in each. The King's coach was surrounded by my musicians, liveried servants on foot, and by officers of my household. On arriving at the open place in front of the palace, I thought myself at the Tuileries. The regiments of Spanish guards, clad, officers and soldiers, like the French guards, and the regiment of the Walloon guards, clad, officers and soldiers, like the Swiss guards, were under arms; the flags waved, the drums beat, and the officers saluted with the half-pike. On the way, the streets were filled with people, the shops with dealers and artisans, all the windows were crowded. Joy showed itself on every face, and we heard nothing but benedictions.

The audience passed off admirably. I asked the hand of the Infanta in marriage on the part of the King; my request was graciously complied with, compliments passed on both sides, and I returned to my house, well pleased with the reception I had met with from both their Catholic Majesties.

There was still the marriage contract to be signed, and this was to take place in the afternoon. Here was to be my great trial, for the majordomo-major and the nuncio of the Pope were to be present at the ceremony, and, according to the infamous and extraor-

dinary instructions I had received from Dubois, I was to precede them! How was this to be done? I had to bring all my ingenuity to bear upon the subject in order to determine. In the embarrassment I felt upon this position, I was careful to affect the most marked attention to the nuncio and the majordomo-major every time I met them and visited them, so as to take from them all idea that I wished to precede them, when I should in reality do so.

The place the majordomo-major was to occupy at this ceremony was behind the King's armchair, a little to the right, so as to allow room for the captain of the guards on duty; to put myself there would be to take his place, and push the captain of the guards away, and those near him. The place of the nuncio was at the side of the King, his face to the armchair; to take it would have been to push him beyond the arm of the chair, which assuredly he would no more have submitted to than the majordomo-major on the other side. I resolved, therefore, to hazard a middle term; to try and introduce myself at the top of the right arm of the chair, a little sideways, so as to take the place of neither, entirely; but, nevertheless, to drive them out, and to cover this with an air of ignorance and of simplicity; and, at the same time, of eagerness, of joy, of curiosity, of courtier-like desire to speak to the King as much as possible: and all this I exactly executed, in appearance stupidly, and in reality very successfully!

When the time for the audience arrived, I took up my position, accordingly, in the manner I have indicated. The majordomo-major and the nuncio entered, and finding me thus placed, and speaking to the King, appeared much surprised. I heard *Signor* and *Señor* repeated right and left of me, and addressed to me—for both expressed themselves with difficulty

in French—and I replied with bows to one and to the other with the smiling air of a man entirely absorbed in joy at his functions, and who understands nothing of what is meant; then I recommenced my conversation with the King, with a sort of liberty and enthusiasm, so that the nuncio and majordomo-major soon grew tired of appealing to a man whose spirit was so transported that he no longer knew where he was, or what was said to him. In this manner I defeated the craft, cunning, and maliciousness of Dubois. At the conclusion of the ceremony, I accompanied the King and Queen to the door of the Hall of Mirrors, taking good care then to show every deference to the majordomo-major and the nuncio, and yielding place to them, in order to remove any impression from their minds that I had just acted in a contrary manner from design.

As soon as their Catholic Majesties had departed, and the door of the salon was closed upon them, I was encircled and, so to speak, almost stifled by the company present, who, one after the other, pressed upon me with the greatest demonstrations of joy and a thousand compliments.

I returned home after the ceremony, which had lasted a long time. While I occupied my stolen position I was obliged, in order to maintain it, to keep up an incessant conversation with the King, and at last, no longer knowing what to talk about, I asked him for an audience the next day, which he readily accorded me. But this direct request was contrary to the usage of the Court, where the ambassadors, the other foreign ministers, and the subjects of the country of whatever rank, address their requests to an officer who is appointed to receive them, who communicates with the King, and names the day and the hour when his Majesty will grant the interview.

Grimaldo, a little after the end of ceremony, had gone to work with the King and Queen, as was customary. I was surprised, an hour after returning home, to receive a letter from this minister, asking me if I had anything to say to the King I did not wish the Queen to hear, referring to the audience I had asked of the King for the morrow, and begging me to tell him what it was for. I replied to him instantly, that having found the opportunity good I had asked for this audience; but if I had not mentioned the Queen, it was because I had imagined she was so accustomed to be present that there was no necessity to allude to her: but as to the rest, I had my thanks to offer to the King upon what had just passed, and nothing to say to him that I should not wish to say to the Queen, and that I should be very sorry if she were not present.

As I was writing this reply, Don Gaspard Giron invited me to go and see the illuminations of the Place Mayor. I quickly finished my letter; we jumped into a coach, and the principal people of my suite jumped into others. We were conducted by détours to avoid the light of the illuminations in approaching them, and we arrived at a fine house which looks upon the middle of the Place, and which is that where the King and Queen go to see the fêtes that take place. We perceived no light in descending or in ascending the staircase. Everything had been closed, but on entering into the chamber which looks upon the Place, we were dazzled, and immediately we entered the balcony speech failed me, from surprise, for more than seven or eight minutes.

This Place is superficially much vaster than any I had ever seen in Paris or elsewhere, and of greater length than breadth. The five stories of the houses which surround it are all of the same level; each has

windows at equal distance, and of equal size, with balconies as deep as they are long, guarded by iron balustrades, exactly alike in every case. Upon each of these balconies two torches of white wax were placed, one at each end of the balcony, supported upon the balustrade, slightly leaning outwards, and attached to nothing. The light that this gives is incredible; it has a splendour and a majesty about it that astonish you and impress you. The smallest type can be read in the middle of the Place, and all about, though the ground-floor is not illuminated.

As soon as I appeared upon the balcony, all the people beneath gathered round and began to cry, *Señor! tauro! tauro!* The people were asking me to obtain for them a bull-fight, which is what they like best in the world, and what the King had not permitted for several years from conscientious principles. Therefore I contented myself the next day with simply telling him of these cries, without asking any questions thereon, while expressing to him my astonishment at an illumination so surprising and so admirable.

Don Gaspard Giron and the Spaniards who were with me in the house from which I saw the illumination, charmed with the astonishment I had displayed at this spectacle, published it abroad with all the more pleasure because they were not accustomed to the admiration of the French, and many noblemen spoke of it to me with great pleasure. Scarcely had I time to return home and sup after this fine illumination than I was obliged to go to the palace for the ball that the King had prepared there, and which lasted until past two in the morning.

The salon was very vast and splendid; the dresses of the company were sumptuous; the appearance of our finest fancy-dress balls did not approach the appearance of this.

What seemed strange to me was to see three bishops in lawn sleeves and cloaks in the ball-room, remaining, too, all the evening, and to see the accoutrement of the camerara-mayor, who held exposed in her hand a great chaplet, and who, while talking and criticising the ball and the dancers, muttered her prayers, and continued to do so while the ball lasted. What I found very strange was, that none of the men present (except six special officers and Maulevrier and myself) were allowed to sit, not even the dancers; in fact, there was not a single seat in the whole salon, not even at the back, except those I have specified.

In Spain, men and women of all ages wear all sorts of colours, and dance if they like, even when more than sixty years old, without exciting the slightest ridicule or astonishment. I saw several examples of this among men and women.

Amongst the company present was Madame Robecque, a Frenchwoman, one of the Queen's ladies, whom I had known before she went to Spain. In former days we had danced together at the Court. Apparently she said so to the Queen, for after having danced with one of the children, she traversed the whole length of the salon, made a fine curtsey to their Catholic Majesties, and came to dislodge me from my retreat, asking me with a curtsey and a smile to dance. I replied to her by saying she was laughing at me; dispute, gallantries; finally, she went to the Queen, who called me and told me that the King and she wished me to dance.

I took the liberty to represent to her that she wished to divert herself at my expense; that this order could not be serious; I alleged my age, my position, the number of years since I had danced; in a word, I did all I could to back out. But all was useless. The King mixed himself in the matter; both he and the

Queen begged me to comply, tried to persuade me I danced very well; at last commanded me, and in such a manner that I was obliged to obey. I acquitted myself, therefore, as well as I could.

The ball being finished, the Marquis de Villagarcias, one of the majordomos, and one of the most honest and most gracious of men I ever saw (since appointed Viceroy of Peru), would not let me leave until I had rested in the refreshment-room, where he made me drink a glass of excellent neat wine, because I was all in a sweat from the minuets and quadrilles I had gone through, under a very heavy coat.

This same evening and the next I illuminated my house within and without, not having a moment's leisure to give any *fête* in the midst of the many functions I had been so precipitately called upon to fulfil.

CHAPTER CIX

ON Thursday, the 27th of November, the King and Queen were to depart from Madrid to Lerma, a pretty hamlet six leagues from Burgos, where they had a palace. On the same day, very early in the morning, our ambassador, Maulevrier, came to me with despatches from Cardinal Dubois, announcing that the Regent's daughter, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, had departed on the 18th of November for Spain, and giving information as to the places she would stop at, the people she would be accompanied by, the day she would arrive at the frontier, and the persons charged with the exchange of the Princesses.

Maulevrier and I thought this news so important that we felt there was no time to lose, and at once hastened away to the palace to communicate it to their Majesties, who we knew were waiting for it most impatiently. We arrived at such an early hour that all was deserted in the palace, and when we reached the door of the Hall of Mirrors, we were obliged to knock loudly in order to be heard. A French valet opened the door, and told us that their Catholic Majesties were still in bed. We did not doubt it, and begged him to apprise them that we wished to have the honour of speaking to them. Such an honour was unheard of, except under extraordinary circumstances; nevertheless the valet quickly returned, saying that their Majesties would receive us, though it was against all rule and usage to do so while they were in bed.

We traversed therefore the long and grand Hall of

Mirrors, turned to the left at the end into a large and fine room, then short off to the left again into a very little chamber, portioned off from the other, and lighted by the door and by two little windows at the top of the partition wall. There was a bed of four feet and a half at most, of crimson damask, with gold fringe, four posts, the curtains open at the foot and at the side the King occupied. The King was almost stretched out upon pillows with a little bed-gown of white satin; the Queen sitting upright, a piece of tapestry in her hand, at the left of the King, some skeins of thread near her, papers scattered upon the rest of the bed and upon an armchair at the side of it. She was quite close to the King, who was in his night-cap, she also, and in her bed-gown, both between the sheets, which were only very imperfectly hidden by the papers.

They made us abridge our reverences, and the King, raising himself a little impatiently, asked us our business. We were alone, the valet having retired after showing us the door.

"Good news, Sire," replied I. "Mademoiselle de Montpensier set out on the 18th; the courier has this instant brought us the news, and we have at once come to present ourselves to you and apprise your Majesties of it."

Joy instantly painted itself on their faces, and immediately they began to question us at great length upon the details the courier had brought us. After an animated conversation, in which Maulevrier took but little part, their Catholic Majesties dismissed us, testifying to us the great pleasure we had caused them by not losing a minute in acquainting them with the departure of Mademoiselle de Montpensier, above all in not having been stopped by the hour, and by the fact that they were in bed.

We went back to my house to dine and returned to the palace in order to see the King and Queen depart. I again received from them a thousand marks of favour. Both the King and Queen, but especially the latter, several times insisted that I must not lose any time in following them to Lerma; upon which I assured them they would find me there as they alighted from their coach.

I set out, in fact, on the 2nd of December, from Madrid, to join the Court, and was to sleep at the Escurial, with the Comtes de Lorges and de Céreste, my second son, the Abbé de Saint-Simon and his brother, Pacquet, and two principal officers of the King's troops, who remained with me as long as I stayed in Spain. In addition to the orders of the King of Spain and the letters of the Marquis de Grimaldo, I was also furnished with those of the nuncio for the Prior of the Escurial, who is, at the same time, governor, in order that I might be shown the marvels of this superb and prodigious monastery, and that everything might be opened for me that I wished to visit; for I had been warned that, without the recommendation of the nuncio, neither that of the King and his minister, nor any official character, would have much served me. It will be seen that, after all, I did not fail to suffer from the churlishness and the superstition of these coarse Jeronimites.

They are black and white monks, whose dress resembles that of the Celestins,—very idle, ignorant, and without austerity, who, by the number of their monasteries and their riches, are in Spain much about what the Benedictines are in France, and like them are a congregation. They elect also, like the Benedictines, their superiors, local and general, except the Prior of the Escurial, who is nominated by the King, remains in office as long as the King likes and no more, and

who is yet better lodged at the Escurial than his Catholic Majesty. 'Tis a prodigy, this building, of extent, of structure, of every kind of magnificence, and contains an immense heap of riches, in pictures, in ornaments, in vases of all kinds, in precious stones, everywhere strewn about, and the description of which I will not undertake, since it does not belong to my subject. Suffice it to say that a curious connoisseur of all these different beauties might occupy himself there for three months without cessation, and then would not have examined all. The gridiron (its form, at least) has regulated all the ordonnance of this sumptuous edifice in honour of Saint-Laurent, and of the battle of Saint-Quentin, gained by Philippe II., who, seeing the action from a height, vowed he would erect this monastery if his troops obtained the victory, and asked his courtiers, if such were the pleasures of the Emperor, his father, who in fact did not go so far for them as that.

There is not a door, a lock, or utensil of any kind, or a piece of plate, that is not marked with a gridiron.

The distance from Madrid to the Escurial is much about the same as that from Paris to Fontainebleau. The country is very flat and becomes a wilderness on approaching the Escurial, which takes its name from a large village you pass, a league off. It is upon an eminence which you ascend imperceptibly, and upon which you see endless deserts on three sides; but it is backed, as it were, by the mountain of Guadarama, which encircles Madrid on three sides, at a distance of several leagues, more or less. There is no village at the Escurial; the lodging of their Catholic Majesties forms the handle of the gridiron. The principal grand officers, and those most necessary, are lodged, as well as the Queen's ladies, in the monastery; on the side by which you arrive all is very badly built.

The church, the grand staircase, and the grand cloister, surprised me. I admired the elegance of the surgery, and the pleasantness of the gardens, which, however, are only a long and wide terrace. The Panthéon frightened me by a sort of horror and majesty. The grand altar and the sacristy wearied my eyes, by their immense opulence. The library did not satisfy me, and the librarians still less. I was received with much civility, and invited to a good supper in the Spanish style, at which the Prior and another monk did the honours. After this first repast my people prepared my meals, but this fat monk always supplied one or two things that it would not have been civil to refuse, and always ate with me; for, in order that he might conduct us everywhere, he never quitted our sides. Bad Latin supplied the place of French, which he did not understand; nor even Spanish.

In the sanctuary at the grand altar, there are windows behind the seats of the priest and his assistants, who celebrate the grand mass. These windows, which are nearly on a level with the sanctuary (very high), belong to the apartment that Philippe II. had built for himself, and in which he died. He heard service through these windows. I wished to see this apartment, which was entered from behind. I was refused. It was in vain that I insisted on the orders of the King and of the nuncio, authorising me to see all I wished. I disputed uselessly. They told me this apartment had been closed ever since the death of Philippe II., and that nobody had entered it. I maintained that King Philippe V. and his suite had seen it. They admitted the fact, but at the same time told me that he had entered by force as a master, threatening to break in the doors, that he was the only King who had entered since Philippe II., and

that they would not open the apartment to anybody. I understood nothing of all this superstition, but I was forced to rest content in my ignorance. Louville, who had entered with the King, had told me that the place contained only five or six dark chambers, and some holes and corners with wainscots plastered with mud; without tapestry, when he saw it, or any kind of furniture; thus I did not lose much by not entering.

In the Rotting-Room, which I have elsewhere described, we read the inscriptions near us, and the monk read others as we asked him. We walked thus, all round, talking and discoursing thereon. Passing to the bottom of the room, the coffin of the unhappy Don Carlos offered itself to our sight.

"As for him," said I, "it is well known why, and of what he died." At this remark, the fat monk turned rusty, maintained he had died a natural death, and began to declaim against the stories which he said had been spread abroad about him. I smiled, saying, I admitted it was not true that his veins had been opened. This observation completed the irritation of the monk, who began to babble in a sort of fury. I diverted myself with it at first in silence; then I said to him, that the King, shortly after arriving in Spain, had had the curiosity to open the coffin of Don Carlos, and that I knew from a man who was present ('twas Louville), that his head had been found between his legs; that Philippe II., his father, had had it cut off before him in the prison.

"Very well!" cried the monk in fury, "apparently he had well deserved it; for Philippe II., had permission from the Pope to do so!" and, thereupon, he began to cry with all his might about the marvels of piety and of justice of Philippe II., and about the boundless power of the Pope, and to cry heresy against

any one who doubted that he could not order, decide, and dispose of all.

Such is the fanaticism of the countries of the Inquisition, where science is a crime, ignorance and superstition the first of virtues. Though my official character protected me, I did not care to dispute, and cause a ridiculous scene with this bigot of a monk. I contented myself with smiling, and by making a sign of silence as I did so to those who were with me. The monk, therefore, had full swing, and preached a long time without giving over. He perceived, perhaps, by our faces, that we were laughing at him, although without gestures or words. At last he showed us the rest of the chamber, still fuming; then we descended to the Panthéon. They did me the singular favour to light about two-thirds of the immense and admirable chandelier, suspended from the middle of the roof, the lights of which dazzled us, and enabled us to distinguish in every part of the Rotting-Room, not only the smallest details of the smallest letter, but the minutest features of the place.

I passed three days in the Escurial, lodged in a large and fine apartment, and all that were with me well lodged also. Our monk, who had always been in an ill-humour since the day of the Rotting-Room, did not recover himself until the parting breakfast came. We quitted him without regret, but not the Escurial, which would pleasantly occupy a curious connoisseur during more than a three months' stay. On the road we met the Marquis de Montalègre, who invited us to dinner with him. The meal was so good that we little regretted the dinner my people had prepared for us.

At last we arrived on the 9th, at our village of Villahalmanzo, where I found most comfortable quarters for myself and all who were with me. I found

there, also, my eldest son, still merely convalescent, with the Abbé de Monthon, who came from Burgos. We supped very gaily, and I reckoned upon taking a good excursion the next day, and upon amusing myself in reconnoitring the village and the environs; but fever seized me during the night, augmented during the day, became violent the following night, so that there was no more talk of going on the 11th to meet the King and Queen at Lerma, as they alighted from their coach, according to arrangement.

The malady increased with such rapidity that I was found to be in great danger, and immediately after, on the point of death. I was bled shortly after. The small-pox, with which the whole country was filled, appeared. The climate was such this year that it froze hard twelve or fourteen hours every day, while from eleven o'clock in the morning till nearly four, the sun shone as brightly as possible, and it was too hot about mid-day for walking! Yet in the shade it did not thaw for an instant. This cold weather was all the more sharp because the air was purer and clearer, and the sky continually of the most perfect serenity.

The King of Spain, who was dreadfully afraid of the small-pox, and who with reason had confidence only in his chief doctor, sent him to me as soon as he was informed of my illness, with orders not to quit me until I was cured. I had, therefore, five or six persons continually around me, in addition to the domestics who served me, one of the best and most skilful physicians in Europe, who, moreover, was capital company, and who did not quit me night or day, and three very good surgeons. The small-pox came out very abundantly all over me; it was of a good kind, and I had no dangerous accident. Every one who waited upon me, master or man, was cut off

from all intercourse with the rest of the world; even those who cooked for us, from those who did not.

The chief physician nearly every day provided new remedies in case of need, and yet administered none to me, except in giving me, as my sole beverage, water, in which, according to its quantity, oranges were thrown, cut in two with their skins on, and which gently simmered before my fire; occasionally some spoonful of a gentle and agreeable cordial during the height of the suppuration, and afterwards a little Rota wine, and some broth, made of beef and partridge.

Nothing was wanting, then, on the part of those who had charge of me. I was their only patient, and they had orders not to quit me, and nothing was wanting for my amusement, when I was in a condition to take any, so much good company being around me, and that at a time when convalescents of this malady experience all the weariness and fretfulness of it. At the end of my illness I was bled and purged once, after which I lived as usual, but in a species of solitude.

During the long interval in which this illness shut me out from all intercourse with the world, the Abbé de Saint-Simon corresponded for me with Cardinal Dubois, Grimaldo, Sartine, and some others.

The King and Queen, not content with having sent me their chief physician, M. Hyghens, to be with me night and day, wished to hear how I was twice a day, and when I was better, unceasingly showed to me a thousand favours, in which they were imitated by all the Court.

But I was six weeks ill in all.

CHAPTER CX

HERE I think will be the fitting place to introduce an account of the daily life of the King and Queen of Spain, which in many respects was entitled to be regarded as singular. During my stay at the Court I had plenty of opportunity to mark it well, so that what I relate may be said to have passed under my own eyes. This, then, was their daily life wherever they were, and in all times and seasons.

The King and Queen never had more than one apartment, and one bed between them, the latter exactly as I have described it when relating my visit with Maulevrier to their Catholic Majesties to carry to them the news of the departure from Paris of the future Princess of the Asturias. During fevers, illness, no matter of what kind, or on whose side,—childbirth even,—never were they a single night apart, and even when the deceased Queen was eaten up with the scrofula, the King continued to sleep with her until a few nights before her death!

About nine o'clock in the morning the curtains were drawn by the Asafeta, followed by a single valet carrying a basin full of caudle. Hyghens, during my convalescence, explained to me how this caudle was made, and in fact concocted some for me to taste. It is a light mixture of broth, milk, wine (which is in the largest quantity), one or two yolks of eggs, sugar, cinnamon, and a few cloves. It is white, has a very strong taste, not unmixed with softness. I should not like to take it habitually, nevertheless it is not disagreeable. You put in it, if you like, crusts of bread,

or, at times, toast, and then it becomes a species of soup; otherwise it is drunk as broth; and, ordinarily, it was in this last fashion the King took it. It is unctuous, but very warm, a restorative singularly good for retrieving the past night, and for preparing you for the next.

While the King partook of this brief breakfast, the Asafeta brought the Queen some tapestry to work at, passed bed-gowns to their Majesties, and put upon the bed some of the papers she found upon the adjoining seats, then withdrew with the valet and what he had brought. Their Majesties then said their morning prayers. Grimaldo afterwards entered. Sometimes they signalled to him to wait, as he came in, and called him when their prayer was over, for there was nobody else, and the bedroom was very small. Then Grimaldo displayed his papers, drew from his pocket an inkstand, and worked with the King; the Queen not being hindered by her tapestry from giving her opinion.

This work lasted more or less according to the business, or to the conversation. Grimaldo, upon leaving with his papers, found the adjoining room empty, and a valet in that beyond, who, seeing him pass, entered into the empty room, crossed it, and summoned the Asafeta, who immediately came and presented to the King his slippers and his dressing-gown; he at once passed across the empty room and entered into a cabinet, where he dressed himself, followed by three valets (never changed) and by the Duc del Arco, or the Marquis de Santa Cruz, and after by both, nobody else ever being present at the ceremony.

The Queen, as soon as the King had passed into his cabinet, put on her stockings and shoes alone with the Asafeta, who gave her her dressing-gown. It was the only moment in which this person could speak to the

Queen, or the Queen to her; but this moment did not stretch at the most to more than half a quarter of an hour. Had they been longer together the King would have known it, and would have wanted to hear what kept them. The Queen passed through the empty chamber and entered into a fine large cabinet, where her toilette awaited her. When the King had dressed in his cabinet—where he often spoke to his confessor—he went to the Queen's toilette, followed by the two seigneurs just named. A few of the specially-privileged were also admitted there. This toilette lasted about three-quarters of an hour, the King and all the rest of the company standing.

When it was over, the King half opened the door of the Hall of Mirrors, which leads into the salon where the Court assembled, and gave his orders; then rejoined the Queen in that room which I have so often called the empty room. There and then took place the private audiences of the foreign ministers, and of the seigneurs, or other subjects who obtained them. Once a week, on Monday, there was a public audience, a practice which cannot be too much praised where it is not abused. The King, instead of half opening the door, threw it wide open, and admitted whoever liked to enter. People spoke to the King as much as they liked, how they liked, and gave him in writing what they liked. But the Spaniards resemble in nothing the French; they are measured, discreet, respectful, brief.

After the audiences, or after amusing himself with the Queen if there are none, the King went to dress. The Queen accompanied him, and they took the communion together (never separately) about once a week, and then they heard a second mass. The confession of the King was said after he rose, and before he went to the Queen's toilette.

Upon returning from mass, or very shortly after, the dinner was served. It was always in the Queen's apartment, as well as the supper, but the King and Queen had each their dishes; the former, few, the latter, many, for she liked eating, and ate of everything; the King always kept to the same things—soup, capon, pigeons, boiled and roast, and always a roast loin of veal—no fruit, or salad, or cheese; pastry, rarely, never *maigre;* eggs, often cooked in various fashion; and he drank nothing but champagne; the Queen the same. When the dinner was finished, they prayed to God together. If anything pressing happened, Grimaldo came and gave them a brief account of it.

About an hour after dinner, they left the apartment by a short passage accessible to the court, and descended by a little staircase to their coach, returning by the same way. The seigneurs who frequented the court pretty constantly assembled, now one, now another, in this passage, or followed their Majesties to their coaches. Very often I saw them in this passage as they went or returned. The Queen always said something pleasant to whoever was there. I will speak elsewhere of the hunting-party their Majesties daily made.

Upon returning, the King gave his orders. If they had not partaken of a collation in the coach, they partook of one upon arriving. It was for the King, a morsel of bread, a big biscuit, some water and wine; and for the Queen, pastry and fruit in season, sometimes cheese. The Prince and the Princess of the Asturias, and the children, followed and waited for them in the inner apartment. This company withdrew in less than half a quarter of an hour. Grimaldo came and worked ordinarily for a long time; it was the time for the real work of the day. When the Queen

went to confession this also was the time she selected. Except what related to the confession, she and her confessor had no time to say anything to each other. The cabinet in which she confessed to him was contiguous to the room occupied by the King, and when the latter thought the confession too long, he opened the door and called her. Grimaldo being gone, they prayed together, or sometimes occupied themselves with spiritual reading until supper. It was served like the dinner. At both meals there were more dishes in the French style than in the Spanish, or even the Italian.

After supper, conversation or prayers conducted them to the hour for bed, when nearly the same observances took place as in the morning. Finally, their Catholic Majesties everywhere had but one wardrobe between them, and were never in private one from another.

These uniform days were the same in all places, and even during the journeys taken by their Majesties, who were thus never separated, except for a few minutes at a time. They passed their lives in one long *tête-à-tête*. When they travelled it was at the merest snail's pace, and they slept on the road, night after night, in houses prepared for them. In their coach they were always alone; when in the palace it was the same.

The King had been accustomed to this monotonous life by his first queen, and he did not care for any other. The new Queen, upon arriving, soon found this out, and found also that if she wished to rule him, she must keep him in the same room, confined as he had been kept by her predecessor. Alberoni was the only person admitted to their privacy. This second marriage of the King of Spain, entirely brought about by Madame des Ursins, was very distasteful to

the Spaniards, who detested that personage most warmly, and were in consequence predisposed to look unfavourably upon any one she favoured. It is true, the new Queen, on arriving, drove out Madame des Ursins, but this showed her to be possessed of as much power as the woman she displaced, and when she began to exercise that power in other directions the popular dislike to her was increased. She made no effort to mitigate it—hating the Spaniards as much as they hated her—and it is incredible to what an extent this reciprocal aversion stretched.

When the Queen went out with the King to the chase or to the atocha, the people unceasingly cried, as well as the citizens in their shops, "*Viva el Re y la Savoyana, y la Savoyana,*" and incessantly repeated, with all their lungs, "*la Savoyana,*" which is the deceased Queen (I say this to prevent mistake), no voice ever crying "*Viva la Reina.*" The Queen pretended to despise this, but inwardly raged (as people saw), she could not habituate herself to it. She has said to me very frequently and more than once: "The Spaniards do not like me, and in return I hate them," with an air of anger and of pique.

These long details upon the daily life of the King and Queen may appear trivial, but they will not be judged so by those who know, as I do, what valuable information is to be gained from similar particulars. I will simply say in passing, that an experience of twenty years has convinced me that the knowledge of such details is the key to many others, and that it is always wanting in histories, often in memoirs the most interesting and instructive, but which would be much more so if they had not neglected this chapter, regarded by those who do not know its price, as a bagatelle unworthy of entering into a serious recital. Nevertheless, I am quite certain, that there is not a

minister of state, a favourite, or a single person of whatever rank, initiated by his office into the domestic life of sovereigns, who will not echo my sentiments.

And now let me give a more distinct account of the King of Spain than I have yet written.

Philip V. was not gifted with superior understanding or with any stock of what is called imagination. He was cold, silent, sad, sober, fond of no pleasure except the chase, fearing society, fearing himself, unexpansive, a recluse by taste and habits, rarely touched by others, of good sense nevertheless, and upright, with a tolerably good knowledge of things, obstinate when he liked, and often then not to be moved; nevertheless, easy at other times to govern and influence.

He was cold. In his campaigns he allowed himself to be led into any position, even under a brisk fire, without budging in the slightest; nay, amusing himself by seeing whether anybody was afraid. Secured and removed from danger he was the same, without thinking that his glory could suffer by it. He liked to make war, but was indifferent whether he went there or not; and present or absent, left everything to the generals without doing anything himself.

He was extremely vain; could bear no opposition in any of his enterprises; and what made me judge he liked praise, was that the Queen invariably praised him—even his face; and asked me one day, at the end of an audience which had led us into conversation, if I did not think him very handsome, and more so than any one I knew? His piety was only custom,—scruples, fears, little observances, without knowing anything of religion: the Pope a divinity when not opposed to him; in fact he had the outside religion of the Jesuits, of whom he was passionately fond.

Although his health was very good, he always feared for it; he was always looking after it. A physician,

such as the one Louis XI. enriched so much at the end of his life, a Maître Coythier would have become a rich and powerful personage by his side; fortunately his physician was a thoroughly good and honourable man, and he who succeeded him devoted to the Queen. Philip V. could speak well—very well, but was often hindered by idleness and self-mistrust. In the audiences I had with him, however, he astonished me by the precision, the grace, the easiness of his words. He was good, easy to serve, familiar with a few. His love of France showed itself in everything. He preserved much gratitude and veneration for the deceased King, and tenderness for the late Monsieur; above all for the Dauphin, his brother, for whose loss he was never consoled. I noticed nothing in him towards any other of the royal family, except the King; and he never asked me concerning anybody in the Court, except, and then in a friendly manner, the Duchesse de Beauvilliers.

He had scruples respecting his crown, that can with difficulty be reconciled with the desire he had to return, in case of misfortune, to the throne of his fathers, which he had more than once so solemnly renounced. He believed himself an usurper! and in this idea nourished his desire to return to France, and abandon Spain and his scruples at one and the same time. It cannot be disguised that all this was very ill-arranged in his head, but there it was, and he would have abandoned Spain had it been possible, because he felt compelled by duty to do so. It was this feeling which principally induced him, after meditating upon it long before I arrived in Spain, to abdicate his throne in favour of his son. It was the same usurpation in his eyes, but not being able to obey his scruples, he contented himself by doing all he could in abdicating. It was still this feeling which, at the death of his son,

troubled him so much, when he saw himself compelled to reascend the throne; though, during his abdication, that son had caused him not a little vexation. As may well be imagined, Philip V. never spoke of these delicate matters to me, but I was not less well informed of them elsewhere.

The Queen desired not less to abandon Spain, which she hated, and to return into France and reign, where she hoped to lead a life of less seclusion, and much more agreeable.

Notwithstanding all I have said, it is perfectly true that Philip V. was but little troubled by the wars he made, that he was fond of enterprises, and that his passion was to be respected and dreaded, and to figure grandly in Europe.

But let me now more particularly describe the Queen.

This princess had much intellect and natural graces, which she knew how to put to account. Her sense, her reflection, and her conduct, were guided by that intellect, from which she drew all the charms and all the advantages possible. Whoever knew her was astonished to find how her intelligence and natural capacity supplied the place of her want of knowledge of the world, of persons, of affairs, upon all of which subjects, her garret life in Parma, and afterwards her secluded life with the King of Spain, hindered her from obtaining any real instruction. The perspicuity she possessed, which enabled her to see the right side of everything that came under her inspection, was undeniable, and this singular gift would have become developed in her to perfection if its growth had not been interrupted by the ill-humour she possessed; which it must be admitted the life she led was more than enough to give her. She felt her talent and her strength, but did not feel the fatuity and pride which weakened them and rendered them ridiculous. The

current of her life was simple, smooth, with a natural gaiety even, which sparkled through the eternal restraint of her existence; and despite the ill-temper and the sharpness which this restraint without rest gave her, she was a woman ordinarily without pretension, and really charming.

When she arrived in Spain she was sure, in the first place, of driving away Madame des Ursins, and of filling her place in the government at once. She seized that place, and took possession also of the King's mind, which she soon entirely ruled. As to public business, nothing could be hidden from her. The King always worked in her presence, never otherwise; all that he saw alone she read and discussed with him. She was always present at all the private audiences that he gave, whether to his subjects or to the foreign ministers; so that, as I have before remarked, nothing possibly could escape her.

As for the King, the eternal night and day *tête-à-tête* she had with him enabled her to sound him thoroughly, to know him by heart, so to speak. She knew perfectly the time for preparatory insinuations, their success; the resistance, when there was any, its course and how to overcome it; the moments for yielding, in order to return afterwards to the charge, and those for holding firm and carrying everything by force. She stood in need of all these intrigues, notwithstanding her credit with the King. If I may dare to say it, his temperament was her strong point, and she sometimes had recourse to it. Then her coldness excited tempests. The King cried and menaced; now and then went further; she held firm, wept, and sometimes defended herself. In the morning all was stormy. The immediate attendants acted towards King and Queen often without penetrating the cause of their quarrel. Peace was concluded at the first op-

portunity, rarely to the disadvantage of the Queen, who mostly had her own way.

A quarrel of this sort arose when I was at Madrid; and I was advised, after hearing details I will not repeat, to mix myself up in it, but I burst out laughing and took good care not to follow this counsel.

CHAPTER CXI

THE chase was every day the amusement of the King, and the Queen was obliged to make it hers. But it was always the same. Their Catholic Majesties did me the singular honour to invite me to it once, and I went in my coach. Thus I saw this pleasure well, and to see it once is to see it always. Animals to shoot are not met with in the plains. They must be sought for among the mountains,—and there the ground is too rugged for hunting the stag, the wild boar, and other beasts as we hunt the hare,—and elsewhere. The plains even are so dry, so hard, so full of deep crevices (that are not perceived until their brink is reached), that the best hounds or harriers would soon be knocked up, and would have their feet blistered, nay lamed, for a long time. Besides, the ground is so thickly covered with sturdy vegetation that the hounds could not derive much help from their noses. Mere shooting on the wing the King had long since quitted, and he had ceased to mount his horse; thus the chase simply resolved itself into a battue.

The Duc del Orco, who, by his post of grand écuyer, had the superintendence of all the hunting arrangements, chose the place where the King and Queen were to go. Two large arbours were erected there, the one against the other, entirely shut in, except where two large openings, like windows, were made, of breast-height. The King, the Queen, the captain of the guards, and the grand écuyer were in the first arbour with about twenty guns and the

wherewithal to load them. In the other arbour, the day I was present, were the Prince of the Asturias, who came in his coach with the Duc de Popoli and the Marquis del Surco, the Marquis de Santa Cruz, the Duc Giovenazzo, majordomo, major and grand écuyer to the Queen, Valouse, two or three officers of the body-guard, and I myself. We had a number of guns, and some men to load them. A single lady of the palace followed the Queen all alone, in another coach, which she did not quit; she carried with her, for her consolation, a book or some work, for no one approached her. Their Majesties and their suite went to the chase in hot haste with relays of guards and of coach horses, for the distance was at least three or four leagues; at the least double that from Paris to Versailles. The party alighted at the arbours, and immediately the carriages, the poor lady of the palace, and all the horses were led away far out of sight, lest they should frighten the beasts.

Two, three, four hundred peasants had early in the morning beaten the country round, with hue and cry, after having enclosed it and driven all the animals together as near these arbours as possible. When in the arbour you were not allowed to stir, or to make the slightest remarks, or to wear attractive colours; and everybody stood up in silence.

This period of expectation lasted an hour and a half, and did not appear to me very amusing. At last we heard loud cries from afar, and soon after we saw troops of animals pass and repass within shot and within half-shot of us; and then the King and the Queen banged away in good earnest. This diversion, or rather species of butchery, lasted more than half an hour, during which stags, hinds, roebucks, boars, hares, wolves, badgers, foxes, and numberless pole-cats passed, and were killed or lamed.

We were obliged to let the King and Queen fire first, although pretty often they permitted the grand écuyer and the captain of the guard to fire also; and as we did not know from whom came the report, we were obliged to wait until the King's arbour was perfectly silent; then let the Prince shoot, who very often had nothing to shoot at, and we still less. Nevertheless, I killed a fox, but a little before I ought to have done so, at which, somewhat ashamed, I made my excuses to the Prince of the Asturias, who burst out laughing, and the company also, I following their example and all passing very politely.

In proportion as the peasants approach and draw nearer each other, the sport advances, and it finishes when they all come close to the arbours, still shouting, and with nothing more behind them. Then the coaches return, the company quits the arbours, the beasts killed are laid before the King. They are placed afterwards behind the coaches. During all this, conversation respecting the sport rolls on. We carried away this day about a dozen or more beasts, some hares, foxes, and pole-cats. The night overtook us soon after we quitted the arbours.

And this is the daily diversion of their Catholic Majesties.

It is time now, however, to resume the thread of my narrative, from which these curious and little-known details have led me.

I have shown in its place the motive which made me desire my embassy; it was to obtain the *grandesse* for my second son, and thus to "branch" my house. I also desired to obtain the Toison d'Or for my eldest son, that he might derive from this journey an ornament which, at his age, was a decoration. I had left Paris with full liberty to employ every aid in order to obtain these things; I had, too, from M. le

Duc d'Orléans, the promise that he would expressly ask the King of Spain for the former favour, employing the name of the King, and letters of the strongest kind from Cardinal Dubois to Grimaldo and Father Aubenton. In the midst of the turmoil of affairs I spoke to both of these persons, and was favourably attended to.

Grimaldo was upright and truthful. He conceived a real friendship for me, and gave me, during my stay at Madrid, all sorts of proofs of it. He said that this union of the two Courts by the two marriages might influence the ministers. His sole point of support, in order to maintain himself in the post he occupied, so brilliant and so envied, was the King of Spain. The Queen, he found, could never be a solid foundation on which to repose. He wished, then, to support himself upon France, or at least to have no opposition from it, and he perfectly well knew the duplicity and caprices of Cardinal Dubois. The Court of Spain, at all times so watchful over M. le Duc d'Orléans, in consequence of what had passed in the time of the Princesse des Ursins, and during the Regency, was not ignorant of the intimate and uninterrupted confidence of this prince in me, or of the terms on which I was with him. These sort of things appear larger than they are, when seen from afar, and the choice that had been made of me for this singular embassy confirmed it still more! Grimaldo, then, might have thought to assure my friendship in his behalf, and my influence with M. le Duc d'Orléans, occasion demanding it; and I don't think I am deceiving myself in attributing to him this policy while he aided me to obtain a favour, at bottom quite natural, and which could cause him no inconvenience.

I regarded the moment at which the marriage would

be celebrated as that at which I stood most chance of obtaining what I desired, and I considered that if it passed over without result to me, all would grow cold, and become uncertain, and very disagreeable. I had forgotten nothing during this first stay in Madrid, in order to please everybody, and I make bold to say that I had all the better succeeded because I had tried to give weight and merit to my politeness, measuring it according to the persons I addressed, without prostitution and without avarice, and that's what made me hasten to learn all I could of the birth, of the dignities, of the posts, of the alliances, of the reputation of each, so as to play my cards well, and secure the game.

But still I needed the letters of M. le Duc d'Orléans, and of Cardinal Dubois. I did not doubt the willingness of the Regent, but I did doubt, and very much too, that of his minister. It has been seen what reason I had for this.

These letters ought to have arrived at Madrid at the same time that I did, but they had not come, and there seemed no prospect of their arriving. What redoubled my impatience was that I read them beforehand, and that I wished to have the time to reflect, and to turn round, in order to draw from them, in spite of them, all the help I could. I reckoned that these letters would be in a feeble spirit, and this opinion made me more desirous to fortify my batteries in Spain in order to render myself agreeable to the King and Queen, and to inspire them with the desire to grant me the favours I wished.

A few days before going to Lerma I received letters from Cardinal Dubois upon my affair. Nobody could be more eager or more earnest than the Cardinal, for he gave me advice how to arrive at my aim, and pressed me to look out for everything which

could aid me; assuring me that his letters, and those of M. le Duc d'Orléans, would arrive in time. In the midst of the perfume of so many flowers, the odour of falsehood could nevertheless be smelt. I had reckoned upon this. I had done all in my power to supply the place of these letters. I received therefore not as gospel, all the marvels Dubois sent me, and I set out for Lerma fully resolved to more and more cultivate my affair without reckoning upon the letters promised me; but determined to draw as much advantage from them as I could.

Upon arriving at Lerma I fell ill as I have described, and the small-pox kept me confined forty days. The letters so long promised and so long expected did not arrive until the end of my quarantine. They were just what I expected. Cardinal Dubois explained himself to Grimaldo in turns and circumlocution, and if one phrase displayed eagerness and desire, the next destroyed it by an air of respect and of discretion, protesting he wished simply what the King of Spain would himself wish, with all the seasoning necessary for the annihilation of his good offices under the pretence that he did not wish to press his Majesty to anything or to importune him.

This written stammering savoured of the bombast of a man who had no desire to serve me, but who, not daring to break his word, used all his wits to twist and overrate the little he could not hinder himself from saying. This letter was simply for Grimaldo, as the letter of M. le Duc d'Orléans was simply for the King of Spain. The last was even weaker than the first. It was like a design in pencil nearly effaced by the rain, and in which nothing connected appeared. It scarcely touched upon the real point, but lost itself in respects, in reservations, in deference, and would propose nothing that was not

according to the taste of the King! In a word, the letter withdrew rather than advanced, and was a sort of ease-conscience which could not be refused, and which did not promise much success.

It is easy to understand that these letters much displeased me. Although I had anticipated all the malice of Cardinal Dubois, I found it exceeded my calculations, and that it was more undisguised than I imagined it would be.

Such as the letters were I was obliged to make use of them. The Abbé de Saint-Simon wrote to Grimaldo and to Sartine, enclosing these letters, for I myself did not yet dare to write on account of the precautions I was obliged to use against the bad air. Sartine and Grimaldo, to whom I had not confided my suspicions that these recommendations would be in a very weak tone, were thrown into the utmost surprise on reading them.

They argued together, they were indignant, they searched for a bias to strengthen that which had so much need of strength, but this bias could not be found; they consulted together, and Grimaldo formed a bold resolution, which astonished me to the last degree, and much troubled me also.

He came to the conclusion that these letters would assuredly do me more harm than good; that they must be suppressed, never spoken of to the King, who must be confirmed without them in the belief that in according me these favours he would confer upon M. le Duc d'Orléans a pleasure, all the greater, because he saw to what point extended all his reserve in not speaking to him about this matter, and mine in not asking for these favours through his Royal Highness, as there was every reason to believe I should do. Grimaldo proposed to draw from these circumstances all the benefit he proposed to have drawn from

the letters had they been written in a fitting spirit, and he said he would answer for it, I should have the *grandesse* and the Toison d'Or without making the slightest allusion to the cold recommendations of M. le Duc d'Orléans to the King of Spain, and of Dubois to him.

Sartine, by his order, made this known to the Abbé de Saint-Simon, who communicated it to me, and after having discussed together with Hyghens, who knew the ground as well as they, and who had really devoted himself to me, I blindly abandoned myself to the guidance and friendship of Grimaldo, with full success, as will be seen.

In relating here the very singular fashion by which my affair succeeded, I am far indeed from abstracting from M. le Duc d'Orléans all gratitude. If he had not confided to me the double marriage, without the knowledge of Dubois, and in spite of the secrecy that had been asked for, precisely on my account, I should not have been led to beg of him the embassy.

I instantly asked for it, declaring that my sole aim was the *grandesse* for my second son, and he certainly accorded it to me with this aim, and promised to aid me with his recommendation in order to arrive at it, but with the utmost secrecy on account of the vexation Dubois would feel, and in order to give himself time to arrange with the minister and induce him to swallow the pill.

If I had not had the embassy in this manner, it would certainly have escaped me; and thus would have been lost all hope of the *grandesse,* to obtain which there would have been no longer occasion, reason, or means.

The friendship and the confidence of this prince prevailed then over the witchery which his miserable preceptor had cast upon him, and if he after-

wards yielded to the roguery, to the schemes, to the folly which Dubois employed in the course of this embassy to ruin and disgrace me, and to bring about the failure of the sole object which had made me desire it, we must only blame his villainy and the deplorable feebleness of M. le Duc d'Orléans, which caused me many sad embarrassments, and did so much harm, but which even did more harm to the state and to the prince himself.

It is with this sad but only too true reflection that I finish the year 1721.

CHAPTER CXII

THE Regent's daughter arrived in Spain at the commencement of the year 1722, and it was arranged that her marriage with the Prince of the Asturias should be celebrated on the 30th of January at Lerma, where their Catholic Majesties were then staying. It was some little distance from my house. I was obliged therefore to start early in the morning in order to arrive in time. On the way I paid a visit of ceremony to the Princess, at Cogollos, ate a mouthful of something, and turned off to Lerma.

As soon as I arrived there, I went to the Marquis of Grimaldo's apartments. His chamber was at the end of a vast room, a piece of which had been portioned off, in order to serve as a chapel. Once again I had to meet the nuncio, and I feared lest he should remember what had passed on a former occasion, and that I should give Dubois a handle for complaint. I saw, therefore, but very imperfectly, the reception of the Princess; to meet whom the King and Queen (who lodged below) and the Prince precipitated themselves, so to speak, almost to the steps of the coach. I quietly went up again to the chapel.

The prie-dieu of the King was placed in front of the altar, a short distance from the steps, precisely as the King's prie-dieu is placed at Versailles, but closer to the altar, and with a cushion on each side of it. The chapel was void of courtiers. I placed myself to the right of the King's cushion just beyond the edge of the carpet, and amused myself there better than I had expected. Cardinal Borgia, pon-

tifically clad, was in the corner, his face turned towards me, learning his lesson between two chaplains in surplices, who held a large book open in front of him. The good prelate did not know how to read; he tried, however, and read aloud, but inaccurately. The chaplains took him up, he grew angry, scolded them, recommenced, was again corrected, again grew angry, and to such an extent that he turned round upon them and shook them by their surplices. I laughed as much as I could; for he perceived nothing, so occupied and entangled was he with his lesson.

Marriages in Spain are performed in the afternoon, and commence at the door of the church, like baptisms. The King, the Queen, the Prince, and the Princess arrived with all the Court, and the King was announced. "Let them wait," said the Cardinal in choler, "I am not ready." They waited, in fact, and the Cardinal continued his lesson, redder than his hat, and still furious. At last he went to the door, at which a ceremony took place that lasted some time. Had I not been obliged to continue at my post, curiosity would have made me follow him. That I lost some amusement is certain, for I saw the King and Queen laughing and looking at their prie-dieu, and all the Court laughing also. The nuncio arriving and seeing by the position I had taken up that I was preceding him, again indicated his surprise to me by gestures, repeating, "Signor, signor;" but I had resolved to understand nothing, and laughingly pointed out the Cardinal to him, and reproached him for not having better instructed the worthy prelate for the honour of the Sacred College. The nuncio understood French very well, but spoke it very badly. This banter and the innocent air with which I gave it, without appearing to notice his demonstrations, created such a fortunate diversion, that nobody else

was thought of; more especially as the poor cardinal more and more caused amusement while continuing the ceremony, during which he neither knew where he was nor what he was doing, being taken up and corrected every moment by his chaplains, and fuming against them so that neither the King nor the Queen could contain themselves. It was the same with everybody else who witnessed the scene.

I could see nothing more than the back of the Prince and the Princess as they knelt each upon a cushion between the prie-dieu and the altar, the Cardinal in front making grimaces indicative of the utmost confusion. Happily all I had to think of was the nuncio, the King's majordomo-major having placed himself by the side of his son, captain of the guards. The grandees were crowded around with the most considerable people: the rest filled all the chapel so that there was no stirring.

Amidst the amusement supplied to us by the poor Cardinal, I remarked extreme satisfaction in the King and Queen at seeing this grand marriage accomplished. The ceremony finished, as it was not long, only the King, the Queen, and, when necessary, the Prince and Princess kneeling, their Catholic Majesties rose and withdrew towards the left corner of their foot-cloth, talked together for a short time, after which the Queen remained where she was, and the King advanced to me, I being where I had been during all the ceremony.

The King did me the honour to say to me, "Monsieur, in every respect I am so pleased with you, and particularly for the manner in which you have acquitted yourself of your embassy, that I wish to give you some marks of my esteem, of my satisfaction, of my friendship. I make you Grandee of Spain of the first class; you, and, at the same time, whichever

of your sons you may wish to have the same distinction; and your eldest son I will make chevalier of the Toison d'Or."

I immediately embraced his knees, and I tried to testify to him my gratitude and my extreme desire to render myself worthy of the favour he deigned to spread upon me, by my attachment, my very humble services, and my most profound respect. Then I kissed his hand, turned and sent for my children, employing the moments which had elapsed before they came in uttering fresh thanks. As soon as my sons appeared, I called the younger and told him to embrace the knees of the King who overwhelmed us with favours, and made him grandee of Spain with me. He kissed the King's hand in rising, the King saying he was very glad of what he had just done. I presented the elder to him afterwards, to thank him for the Toison. He simply bent very low and kissed the King's hand. As soon as this was at an end, the King went towards the Queen, and I followed him with my children. I bent very low before the Queen, thanked her, then presented to her my children, the younger first, the elder afterwards. The Queen received us with much goodness, said a thousand civil things, then walked away with the King, followed by the Prince, having upon his arm the Princess, whom we saluted in passing; and they returned to their apartments. I wished to follow them, but was carried away, as it were, by the crowd which pressed eagerly around me to compliment me. I was very careful to reply in a fitting manner to each, and with the utmost politeness, and though I but little expected these favours at this moment, I found afterwards that all this numerous court was pleased with me.

A short time after the celebration of the marriage between the Regent's daughter and the Prince of the

Asturias, the day came on which my eldest son was to receive the Toison d'Or. The Duc de Liria was to be his godfather, and it was he who conducted us to the place of ceremony. His carriage was drawn by four perfectly beautiful Neapolitan horses; but these animals, which are often extremely fantastical, would not stir. The whip was vigorously applied; results—rearing, snorting, fury, the carriage in danger of being upset. Time was flying; I begged the Duc de Liria, therefore, to get into my carriage, so that we might not keep the King and the company waiting for us. It was in vain I represented to him that this function of godfather would in no way be affected by changing his own coach for mine, since it would be by necessity. He would not listen to me. The horses continued their game for a good half hour before they consented to start.

All my cortège followed us, for I wished by this display to show the King of Spain how highly I appreciated the honours of his Court. On the way the horses again commenced their pranks. I again pressed the Duc de Liria to change his coach, and he again refused. Fortunately the pause this time was much shorter than at first; but before we reached the end of our journey there came a message to say that the King was waiting for us. At last we arrived, and as soon as the King was informed of it he entered the room where the chapter of the order was assembled. He straightway sat himself down in an armchair, and while the rest of the company were placing themselves in position, the Queen, the Princess of the Asturias, and their suite, seated themselves as simple spectators at the end of the room.

All the chapter having arranged themselves in order, the door in front of the King, by which we had entered, was closed, my son remaining outside with a

number of the courtiers. Then the King covered himself, and all the chevaliers at the same time, in the midst of a silence, without sign, which lasted as long as a little prayer. After this, the King very briefly proposed that the Vidâme de Chartres should be received into the order. All the chevaliers uncovered themselves, made an inclination, without rising, and covered themselves again. After another silence, the King called the Duc de Liria, who uncovered himself, and with a reverence approached the King, by whom he was thus addressed: "Go and see if the Vidâme de Chartres is not somewhere about here."

The Duc de Liria made another reverence to the King, but none to the chevaliers (who, nevertheless, were uncovered at the same time as he), went away, the door was closed upon him, and the chevaliers covered themselves again. The reverences just made, and those I shall have occasion to speak of in the course of my description, were the same as are seen at the receptions of the chevaliers of the Saint-Esprit, and in all grand ceremonies.

The Duc de Liria remained outside nearly a quarter of an hour, because it is assumed that the new chevalier is ignorant of the proposition made for him, and that it is only by chance he is found in the palace, time being needed in order to look for him. The Duc de Liria returned, and immediately after the door was again closed, and he advanced to the King, as before, saying that the Vidâme de Chartres was in the other room.

Upon this the King ordered him to go and ask the Vidâme if he wished to accept the Order of the Toison d'Or, and be received into it, and undertake to observe its statutes, its duties, its ceremonies, take its oaths, promise to fulfil all the conditions submitted to every one who is admitted into it, and agree

to conduct himself in everything like a good, loyal, brave, and virtuous chevalier. The Duc de Liria withdrew as he had before withdrawn. The door was again closed. He returned after having been absent a shorter time than at first. The door was again closed, and he approached the King as before, and announced to him the consent and the thanks of the Vidâme. "Very well," replied the King. "Go seek him, and bring him here."

The Duc de Liria withdrew, as on the previous occasions, and immediately returned, having my son on his left. The door being open, anybody was at liberty to enter, and see the ceremony.

The Duc de Liria conducted my son to the feet of the King, and then seated himself in his place. My son, in advancing, had lightly inclined himself to the chevaliers, right and left; and after having made in the middle of the room a profound bow, knelt before the King, without quitting his sword, and having his hat under his arm, and no gloves on. The chevaliers, who had uncovered themselves at the entry of the Duc de Liria, covered themselves when he sat down, and the Prince of the Asturias acted precisely as they acted.

The King repeated to my son the same things, a little more lengthily, that had been said to him by the Duc de Liria, and received his promise upon each in succession. Afterwards, an attendant, who was standing in waiting behind the table, presented to the King, from between the table and the chair, a large book, open, and in which was a long oath, that my son repeated to the King, who had the book upon his knees, the oath in French, and on loose paper, being in it. This ceremony lasted rather a long time. Afterwards, my son kissed the King's hand, and the King made him rise and pass, without reverence, di-

rectly before the table, towards the middle of which he knelt, his back to the Prince of the Asturias, his face to the attendant, who showed him (the table being between them) what to do. There was upon this table a great crucifix of enamel upon a stand, with a missal open at the Canon, the Gospel of Saint-John, and forms, in French, of promises and oaths to be made, whilst putting the hand now upon the Canon, now upon the Gospel. The oath-making took up some time; after which my son came back and knelt before the King again as before.

Then, the Duc del Orco, grand écuyer, and Valouse, premier écuyer, who have had the Toison since, and who were near me, went away, the Duke first, Valouse behind him, carrying in his two hands, with marked care and respect, the sword of the Grand Captain, Don Gonzalvo de Cordova, who is never called otherwise. They walked, with measured step, outside the right-hand seats of the chevaliers, then entered the chapter, where the Duc de Liria had entered with my son, marched inside the left-hand seats of the chevaliers, without reverence, but the Duke inclining himself; Valouse not doing so on account of the respect due to the sword; the grandees did not incline themselves.

The Duke on arriving between the Prince of the Asturias and the King, knelt, and Valouse knelt behind him. Some moments after, the King made a sign to them; Valouse drew the sword from its sheath which he put under his arm, held the naked weapon by the middle of the blade, kissed the hilt, and presented it to the King, who, without uncovering himself, kissed the pommel, took the sword in both hands by the handle, held it upright some moments; then held it with one hand, but almost immediately with the other as well, and struck it three

times upon each shoulder of my son, alternately, saying to him, "By Saint-George and Saint-Andrew I make you Chevalier." And the weight of the sword was so great that the blows did not fall lightly. While the King was striking them, the grand écuyer and the premier remained in their places kneeling. The sword was returned as it had been presented, and kissed in the same manner. Valouse put it back into its sheath, after which the grand écuyer and the premier écuyer returned as they came.

This sword, handle included, was more than four feet long; the blade four good digits wide, thick in proportion, insensibly diminishing in thickness and width to the point, which was very small. The handle appeared to me of worked enamel, long and very large; as well as the pommel; the crossed piece long, and the two ends wide, even, worked, without branch. I examined it well, and I could not hold it in the air with one hand, still less handle it with both hands except with much difficulty. It is pretended that this is the sword the Great Captain made use of, and with which he obtained so many victories.

I marvelled at the strength of the men in those days, with whom I believe early habits did much. I was touched by the grand honour rendered to the Great Captain's memory; his sword becoming the sword of the State, carried even by the King with great respect. I repeated, more than once, that if I were the Duc de Scose (who descends in a direct line from the Great Captain by the female branch, the male being extinct), I would leave nothing undone to obtain the Toison, in order to enjoy the honour and the sensible pleasure of being struck by this sword, and with such great respect for my ancestor. But to return to the ceremony from which this little digression has taken me.

The accolade being given by the King after the blows with the sword, fresh oaths being taken at his feet, then before the table as at first, and on this occasion at greater length, my son returned and knelt before the King, but without saying anything more. Then Grimaldo rose and, without reverence, left the chapter by the left, went behind the right-hand seats of the chevaliers, and took the collar of the Toison which was extended at the end of the table. At this moment the King told my son to rise, and to remain standing in the same place. The Prince of the Asturias, and the Marquis de Villena then rose also, and approached my son, both covered, all the other chevaliers remaining seated and covered. Then Grimaldo, passing between the table and the empty seat of the Prince of the Asturias, presented, standing, the collar to the King, who took it with both hands, and meanwhile Grimaldo, passing behind the Prince of the Asturias, went and placed himself behind my son. As soon as he was there, the King told my son to bend very low, but without kneeling, and then leaning forward, but without rising, placed the collar upon him, and made him immediately after stand upright. The King then took hold of the collar, simply holding the end of it in his hand. At the same time, the collar was attached to the left shoulder by the Prince of the Asturias, to the right shoulder by the Marquis de Villena, and behind by Grimaldo; the King still holding the end.

When the collar was attached, the Prince of the Asturias, the Marquis de Villena, and Grimaldo, without making a reverence and no chevalier uncovering himself, went back to their places, and sat down; at the same moment my son knelt before the King, and bared his head. Then the Duc de Liria, without reverence, and uncovered (no chevalier uncover-

ing himself), placed himself before the King at the left, by the side of my son, and both made their reverences to the King; turned round to the Prince of the Asturias, did the same to him, he rising and doing my son the honour to embrace him, and as soon as he was reseated they made a reverence to him; then, turning to the King, made him one; afterwards they did the same to the Marquis de Villena, who rose and embraced my son. Then he reseated himself; upon which they made a reverence to him, then turning again towards the King, made another to him; and so on from right to left until every chevalier had been bowed to in a similar manner. Then my son sat down, and the Duc de Liria returned to his place.

After this long series of bows, so bewildering for those who play the chief part in it, the King remained a short time in his armchair, then rose, uncovered himself, and retired into his apartment as he came. I had instructed my son to hurry forward and arrive before him at the door of his inner apartment. He was in time, and I also, to kiss the hand of the King, and to express our thanks, which were well received. The Queen arrived and overwhelmed us with compliments. I must observe that the ceremony of the sword and the accolade are not performed at the reception of those who, having already another order, are supposed to have received them, like the chevaliers of the Saint-Esprit and of Saint-Michel, and the chevaliers of Saint-Louis.

Their Catholic Majesties being gone, we withdrew to my house, where a very grand dinner was prepared. The usage is, before the reception, to visit all the chevaliers of the Toison, and when the day is fixed, to visit all those invited to dinner on the day of the ceremony; the godfather, with the other chevalier by whom he is accompanied, also invites

them at the palace before they enter the chapter, and aids the new chevalier to do the honours of the repast. I had led my son with me to pay these visits. Nearly all the chevaliers came to dine with us, and many other nobles. The Duc d'Albuquerque, whom I met pretty often, and who had excused himself from attending a dinner I had previously given, on account of his stomach (ruined as he said in the Indies), said he would not refuse me twice, on condition that I permitted him to take nothing but soup, because meat was too solid for him. He came, and partook of six sorts of soup, moderately of all; he afterwards lightly soaked his bread in such ragoûts as were near him, eating only the end, and finding everything very good. He drank nothing but wine and water. The dinner was gay, in spite of the great number of guests. The Spaniards eat as much as, nay more than, we, and with taste, choice, and pleasure: as to drink, they are very modest.

On the 13th of March, 1722, their Catholic Majesties returned from their excursion to the Retiro. The hurried journey I had just made to the former place, immediately after the arrival of a courier, and in spite of most open prohibitions forbidding every one to go there, joined to the fashion, full of favour and goodness, with which I had been distinguished by their Majesties ever since my arrival in Spain, caused a most ridiculous rumour to obtain circulation, and which, to my great surprise, at once gained much belief.

It was reported there that I was going to quit my position of ambassador from France, and be declared prime minister of Spain! The people who had been pleased, apparently, with the expense I had kept up, and to whom not one of my suite had given the slightest cause of complaint, set to crying after me in the

streets; announcing my promotion, displaying joy at it, and talking of it even in the shops. A number of persons even assembled round my house to testify to me their pleasure. I dispersed them as civilly and as quickly as possible, assuring them the report was not true, and that I was forthwith about to return to France.

This was nothing more than the truth. I had finished all my business. It was time to think about setting out. As soon, however, as I talked about going, there was nothing which the King and the Queen did not do to detain me. All the Court, too, did me the favour to express much friendship for me, and regret at my departure. I admit even that I could not easily make up my mind to quit a country where I had found nothing but fruits and flowers, and to which I was attached, as I shall ever be, by esteem and gratitude. I made at once a number of farewell visits among the friends I had been once acquainted with; and on the 21st of March I had my parting state audiences of the King and Queen separately. I was surprised with the dignity, the precision, and the measure of the King's expressions, as I had been surprised at my first audience. I received many marks of personal goodness, and of regret at my departure from his Catholic Majesty, and from the Queen even more; from the Prince of the Asturias a good many also. But in another direction I met with very different treatment, which I cannot refrain from describing, however ridiculous it may appear.

I went, of course, to say my adieux to the Princess of the Asturias, and I was accompanied by all my suite. I found the young lady standing under a daïs, the ladies on one side, the grandees on the other; and I made my three reverences, then uttered my compli-

ments. I waited in silence her reply, but 'twas in vain. She answered not one word.

After some moments of silence, I thought I would furnish her with matter for an answer; so I asked her what orders she had for the King, for the Infanta, for Madame, and for M. and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. By way of reply, she looked at me and belched so loudly in my face, that the noise echoed throughout the chamber. My surprise was such that I was stupefied. A second belch followed as noisy as the first.

I lost countenance at this, and all power of hindering myself from laughing. Turning round, therefore, I saw everybody with their hands upon their mouths, and their shoulders in motion. At last a third belch, still louder than the two others, threw all present into confusion, and forced me to take flight, followed by all my suite, amid shouts of laughter, all the louder because they had previously been kept in. But all barriers of restraint were now thrown down; Spanish gravity was entirely disconcerted; all was deranged; no reverences; each person, bursting with laughter, escaped as he could, the Princess all the while maintaining her countenance. Her belches were the only answers she made me. In the adjoining room we all stopped to laugh at our ease, and express our astonishment afterwards more freely.

The King and Queen were soon informed of the success of this audience, and spoke of it to me after dinner at the Racket Court. They were the first to laugh at it, so as to leave others at liberty to do so too; a privilege that was largely made use of without pressing. I received and I paid numberless visits; and as it is easy to flatter one's self, I fancied I might flatter myself that I was regretted.

I left Madrid on the 24th of March, after having

had the honour of paying my court to their Catholic Majesties all the afternoon at the Racket Court, they overwhelming me with civilities, and begging me to take a final adieu of them in their apartments. I had devoted the last few days to the friends whom, during my short stay of six months, I had made. Whatever might be the joy and eagerness I felt at the prospect of seeing Madame de Saint-Simon and my Paris friends again, I could not quit Spain without feeling my heart moved, or without regretting persons from whom I had received so many marks of goodness, and for whom, all I had seen of the nation, had made me conceive esteem, respect, and gratitude. I kept up, for many years, a correspondence with Grimaldo, while he lived, in fact, and after his fall and disgrace, which occurred long after my departure, with more care and attention than formerly. My attachment, full of respect and gratitude for the King and Queen of Spain, induced me to do myself the honour of writing to them on all occasions. They often did me the honour to reply to me; and always charged their new ministers in France and the persons of consideration who came there, to convey to me the expression of their good feeling for me.

After a journey without particular incident, I embarked early one morning upon the Garonne, and soon arrived at Bordeaux. The jurats did me the honour to ask, through Ségur, the under-mayor, at what time they might come and salute me. I invited them to supper, and said to Ségur that compliments would be best uttered glass in hand. They came, therefore, to supper, and appeared to me much pleased with this civility. On the morrow, the tide early carried me to Blaye, the weather being most delightful. I slept only one night there, and to save time did not go to Ruffec.

On the 13th of April, I arrived, about five o'clock in the afternoon, at Loches. I slept there because I wished to write a volume of details to the Duchesse de Beauvilliers, who was six leagues off, at one of her estates. I sent my packet by an express, and in this manner I was able to say what I liked to her without fearing that the letter would be opened.

On the morrow, the 14th, I arrived at Etampes, where I slept, and the 15th, at ten o'clock in the morning, I reached Chartres, where Madame de Saint-Simon was to meet me, dine, and sleep, so that we might have the pleasure of opening our hearts to each other, and of finding ourselves together again in solitude and in liberty, greater than could be hoped for in Paris during the first few days of my return. The Duc d'Humières and Louville came with her. She arrived an hour after me, fixing herself in the little château of the Marquis d'Arpajan, who had lent it to her, and where the day appeared to us very short as well as the next morning, the 16th of April.

To conclude the account of my journey, let me say that I arrived in Paris shortly after, and at once made the best of my way to the Palais Royal, where M. le Duc d'Orléans gave me a sincere and friendly welcome.

CHAPTER CXIII

FEW events of importance had taken place during my absence in Spain. Shortly after my return, however, a circumstance occurred which may fairly claim description from me. Let me, therefore, at once relate it.

Cardinal Dubois, every day more and more firmly established in the favour of M. le Duc d'Orléans, pined for nothing less than to be declared prime minister. He was already virtually in that position, but was not publicly or officially recognised as being so. He wished, therefore, to be declared.

One great obstacle in his path was the Maréchal de Villeroy, with whom he was on very bad terms, and whom he was afraid of transforming into an open and declared enemy, owing to the influence the Maréchal exerted over others. Tormented with agitating thoughts, every day that delayed his nomination seemed to him a year. Dubois became doubly ill-tempered and capricious, more and more inaccessible, and accordingly the most pressing and most important business was utterly neglected. At last he resolved to make a last effort at reconciliation with the Maréchal, but mistrusting his own powers, decided upon asking Cardinal Bissy to be the mediator between them.

Bissy with great willingness undertook the peaceful commission; spoke to Villeroy, who appeared quite ready to make friends with Dubois, and even consented to go and see him. As chance would have it, he went, accompanied by Bissy, on Tuesday morn-

ing. I at the same time went, as was my custom, to Versailles to speak to M. le Duc d'Orléans upon some subject, I forget now what.

It was the day on which the foreign ministers had their audience of Cardinal Dubois, and when Bissy and Villeroy arrived, they found these ministers waiting in the chamber adjoining the Cardinal's cabinet.

The established usage is that they have their audience according to the order in which they arrive, so as to avoid all disputes among them as to rank and precedence. Thus Bissy and Villeroy found Dubois closeted with the Russian minister. It was proposed to inform the Cardinal at once, of a thing so rare as a visit from the Maréchal de Villeroy; but the Maréchal would not permit it, and sat down upon a sofa with Bissy to wait like the rest.

The audience being over, Dubois came from his cabinet, conducting the Russian minister, and immediately saw his sofa so well ornamented. He saw nothing but that in fact; on the instant he ran there, paid a thousand compliments to the Maréchal for anticipating him, when he was only waiting for permission to call upon him, and begged him and Bissy to step into the cabinet. While they were going there, Dubois made his excuses to the ambassadors for attending to Villeroy before them, saying that his functions and his assiduity as governor of the King did not permit him to be long absent from the presence of his Majesty; and with this compliment he quitted them and returned into his cabinet.

At first nothing passed but reciprocal compliments and observations from Cardinal Bissy, appropriate to the subject. Then followed protestations from Dubois and replies from the Maréchal. Thus far, the sea was very smooth. But absorbed in his song, the Maréchal began to forget its tune; then to plume

himself upon his frankness and upon his plain speaking; then by degrees, growing hot in his honours, he gave utterance to divers naked truths, closely akin to insults.

Dubois, much astonished, pretended not to feel the force of these observations, but as they increased every moment, Bissy tried to call back the Maréchal, explain things to him, and give a more pleasant tone to the conversation. But the mental tide had begun to rise, and now it was entirely carrying away the brains of Villeroy. From bad to worse was easy. The Maréchal began now to utter unmistakable insults and the most bitter reproaches. In vain Bissy tried to silence him; representing to him how far he was wandering from the subject they came to talk upon; how indecent it was to insult a man in his own house, especially after arriving on purpose to conclude a reconciliation with him. All Bissy could say simply had the effect of exasperating the Maréchal, and of making him vomit forth the most extravagant insults that insolence and disdain could suggest.

Dubois, stupefied and beside himself, was deprived of his tongue, could not utter a word; while Bissy, justly inflamed with anger, uselessly tried to interrupt his friend. In the midst of the sudden fire which had seized the Maréchal, he had placed himself in such a manner that he barred the passage to the door, and he continued his invectives without restraint. Tired of insults, he passed to menaces and derision, saying to Dubois that since he had now thrown off all disguise, they no longer were on terms to pardon each other, and then he assured Dubois that, sooner or later, he would do him all the injury possible, and gave him what he called good counsel.

"You are all powerful," said he; "everybody bends before you; nobody resists you; what are the greatest

people in the land compared with you? Believe me, you have only one thing to do; employ all your power, put yourself at ease, and arrest me, if you dare. Who can hinder you? Arrest me, I say, you have only that course open."

Thereupon, he redoubled his challenges and his insults, like a man who is thoroughly persuaded that between arresting him and scaling Heaven there is no difference. As may well be imagined, such astounding remarks were not uttered without interruption, and warm altercations from the Cardinal de Bissy, who, nevertheless, could not stop the torrent. At last, carried away by anger and vexation, Bissy seized the Maréchal by the arm and the shoulder, and hurried him to the door, which he opened, and then pushed him out, and followed at his heels. Dubois, more dead than alive, followed also, as well as he could—he was obliged to be on his guard against the foreign ministers who were waiting. But the three disputants vainly tried to appear composed; there was not one of the ministers who did not perceive that some violent scene must have passed in the cabinet, and forthwith Versailles was filled with this news; which was soon explained by the bragging, the explanations, the challenges, and the derisive speeches of the Maréchal de Villeroy.

I had worked and chatted for a long time with M. le Duc d'Orléans. He had passed into his wardrobe, and I was standing behind his bureau arranging his papers when I saw Cardinal Dubois enter like a whirlwind, his eyes starting out of his head. Seeing me alone, he screamed rather than asked, "Where is M. le Duc d'Orléans?" I replied that he had gone into his wardrobe, and seeing him so overturned, I asked him what was the matter.

"I am lost, I am lost!" he replied, running to the

wardrobe. His reply was so loud and so sharp that M. le Duc d'Orléans, who heard it, also ran forward, so that they met each other in the doorway. They returned towards me, and the Regent asked what was the matter.

Dubois, who always stammered, could scarcely speak, so great was his rage and fear; but he succeeded at last in acquainting us with the details I have just given, although at greater length. He concluded by saying that after the insults he had received so treacherously, and in a manner so basely premeditated, the Regent must choose between him and the Maréchal de Villeroy, for that after what had passed he could not transact any business or remain at the Court in safety and honour, while the Maréchal de Villeroy remained there!

I cannot express the astonishment into which M. le Duc d'Orléans and I were thrown. We could not believe what we had heard, but fancied we were dreaming. M. le Duc d'Orléans put several questions to Dubois, I took the liberty to do the same, in order to sift the affair to the bottom. But there was no variation in the replies of the Cardinal, furious as he was. Every moment he presented the same option to the Regent; every moment he proposed that the Cardinal de Bissy should be sent for as having witnessed everything. It may be imagined that this second scene, which I would gladly have escaped, was tolerably exciting.

The Cardinal still insisting that the Regent must choose which of the two be sent away, M. le Duc d'Orléans asked me what I thought. I replied that I was so bewildered and so moved by this astounding occurrence that I must collect myself before speaking. The Cardinal, without addressing himself to me, but to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who he saw was plunged

in embarrassment, strongly insisted that he must come to some resolution. Upon this M. le Duc d'Orléans beckoned me over, and I said to him that hitherto I had always regarded the dismissal of the Maréchal de Villeroy as a very dangerous enterprise, for reasons I had several times alleged to his Royal Highness: but that now whatever peril there might be in undertaking it, the frightful scene that had just been enacted persuaded me that it would be much more dangerous to leave him near the King than to get rid of him altogether. I added that this was my opinion, since his Royal Highness wished to know it without giving me the time to reflect upon it with more coolness; but as for the execution, that must be well discussed before being attempted.

Whilst I spoke, the Cardinal pricked up his ears, turned his eyes upon me, sucked in all my words, and changed colour like a man who hears his doom pronounced. My opinion relieved him as much as the rage with which he was filled permitted. M. le Duc d'Orléans approved what I had just said, and the Cardinal, casting a glance upon me as of thanks, said he was the master, and must choose, but that he must choose at once, because things could not remain as they were. Finally, it was agreed that the rest of the day (it was now about twelve) and the following morning should be given to reflection upon the matter, and that the next day, at three o'clock in the afternoon, I should meet M. le Duc d'Orléans.

The next day accordingly I went to M. le Prince, whom I found with the Cardinal Dubois. M. le Duc entered a moment after, quite full of the adventure. Cardinal Dubois did not fail, though, to give him an abridged recital of it, loaded with comments and reflections. He was more his own master than on the preceding day, having had time to recover himself,

and cherishing hopes that the Maréchal would be sent to the right about. It was here that I heard of the brag of the Maréchal de Villeroy concerning the struggle he had had with Dubois, and of the challenges and insults he had uttered with a confidence which rendered his arrest more and more necessary.

After we had chatted awhile, standing, Dubois went away. M. le Duc d'Orléans sat down at his bureau, and M. le Duc and I sat in front of him. There we deliberated upon what ought to be done. After a few words of explanation from the Regent, he called upon me to give my opinion. I did so as briefly as possible, repeating what I had said on the previous day. M. le Duc d'Orléans, during my short speech, was very attentive, but with the countenance of a man much embarrassed.

As soon as I had finished, he asked M. le Duc what he thought. M. le Duc said his opinion was mine, and that if the Maréchal de Villeroy remained in his office there was nothing for it but to put the key outside the door; that was his expression. He reproduced some of the principal reasons I had alleged, supported them, and concluded by saying there was not a moment to lose. M. le Duc d'Orléans summed up a part of what had been said, and agreed that the Maréchal de Villeroy must be got rid of. M. le Duc again remarked that it must be done at once. Then we set about thinking how we could do it.

M. le Duc d'Orléans asked me my advice thereon. I said there were two things to discuss, the pretext and the execution. That a pretext was necessary, such as would convince the impartial, and be unopposed even by the friends of the Maréchal de Villeroy; that above all things we had to take care to give no one ground for believing that the disgrace of Villeroy was the fruit of the insults he had heaped upon Car-

dinal Dubois; that outrageous as those insults might be, addressed to a cardinal, to a minister in possession of entire confidence, and at the head of affairs, the public, who envied him and did not like him, well remembering whence he had sprung, would consider the victim too illustrious; that the chastisement would overbalance the offence, and would be complained of; that violent resolutions, although necessary, should always have reason and appearances in their favour; that therefore I was against allowing punishment to follow too quickly upon the real offence, inasmuch as M. le Duc d'Orléans had one of the best pretexts in the world for disgracing the Maréchal, a pretext known by everybody, and which would be admitted by everybody.

I begged the Regent then to remember that he had told me several times he never had been able to speak to the King in private, or even in a whisper before others; that when he had tried, the Maréchal de Villeroy had at once come forward poking his nose between them, and declaring that while he was governor he would never suffer any one, not even his Royal Highness, to address his Majesty in a low tone, much less to speak to him in private. I said that this conduct towards the Regent, a grandson of France, and the nearest relative the King had, was insolence enough to disgust every one, and apparent as such at half a glance. I counselled M. le Duc d'Orléans to make use of this circumstance, and by its means to lay a trap for the Maréchal into which there was not the slightest doubt he would fall. The trap was to be thus arranged. M. le Duc d'Orléans was to insist upon his right to speak to the King in private, and upon the refusal of the Maréchal to recognise it, was to adopt a new tone and make Villeroy feel he was the master. I added, in conclusion, that this snare

must not be laid until everything was ready to secure its success.

When I had ceased speaking, "You have robbed me," said the Regent; "I was going to propose the same thing if you had not. What do you think of it, Monsieur?" regarding M. le Duc. That Prince strongly approved the proposition I had just made, briefly praised every part of it, and added that he saw nothing better to be done than to execute this plan very punctually.

It was agreed afterwards that no other plan could be adopted than that of arresting the Maréchal, and sending him right off at once to Villeroy, and then, after having allowed him to repose there a day or two, on account of his age, but well watched, to see if he should be sent on to Lyons or elsewhere. The manner in which he was to be arrested was to be decided at Cardinal Dubois' apartments, where the Regent begged me to go at once. I rose accordingly, and went there.

I found Dubois with one or two friends, all of whom were in the secret of this affair, as he at once told me, to put me at my ease. We soon therefore entered upon business, but it would be superfluous to relate here all that passed in this little assembly. What we resolved on was very well executed, as will be seen. I arranged with Le Blanc, who was one of the conclave, that the instant the arrest had taken place, he should send to Meudon, and simply inquire after me; nothing more, and that by this apparently meaningless compliment, I should know that the Maréchal had been packed off.

I returned towards evening to Meudon, where several friends of Madame de Saint-Simon and of myself often slept, and where others, following the fashion established at Versailles and Paris, came to dine or

sup, so that the company was always very numerous. The scene between Dubois and Villeroy was much talked about, and the latter universally blamed. Neither then nor during the ten days which elapsed before his arrest, did it enter into the head of anybody to suppose that anything worse would happen to him than general blame for his unmeasured violence, so accustomed were people to his freaks, and to the feebleness of M. le Duc d'Orléans. I was now delighted, however, to find such general confidence, which augmented that of the Maréchal, and rendered more easy the execution of our project against him; punishment he more and more deserved by the indecency and affectation of his discourses, and the audacity of his continual challenges.

Three or four days after, I went to Versailles, to see M. le Duc d'Orléans. He said that, for want of a better, and in consequence of what I had said to him on more than one occasion of the Duc de Charost, it was to him he intended to give the office of governor of the King: that he had secretly seen him: that Charost had accepted with willingness the post, and was now safely shut up in his apartment at Versailles, seeing no one, and seen by no one, ready to be led to the King the moment the time should arrive. The Regent went over with me all the measures to be taken, and I returned to Meudon, resolved not to budge from it until they were executed, there being nothing more to arrange.

On Sunday, the 12th of August, 1722, M. le Duc d'Orléans went, towards the end of the afternoon, to work with the King, as he was accustomed to do several times each week; and as it was summer time now, he went after his airing, which he always took early. This work was to show the King by whom were to be filled up vacant places in the church,

among the magistrates and intendants, &c., and to briefly explain to him the reasons which suggested the selection, and sometimes the distribution of the finances. The Regent informed him, too, of the foreign news, which was within his comprehension, before it was made public. At the conclusion of this labour, at which the Maréchal de Villeroy was always present, and sometimes M. de Fréjus (when he made bold to stop), M. le Duc d'Orléans begged the King to step into a little back cabinet, where he would say a word to him alone.

The Maréchal de Villeroy at once opposed. M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had laid this snare for him, saw him fall into it with satisfaction. He represented to the Maréchal that the King was approaching the age when he would govern by himself, that it was time for him, who was meanwhile the depository of all his authority, to inform him of things which he could understand, and which could only be explained to him alone, whatever confidence might merit any third person. The Regent concluded by begging the Maréchal to cease to place any obstacles in the way of a thing so necessary and so important, saying that he had, perhaps, to reproach himself for,—solely out of complaisance to him,—not having commenced before.

The Maréchal, arising and stroking his wig, replied that he knew the respect he owed him, and knew also quite as well the respect he owed to the King, and to his place, charged as he was with the person of his Majesty, and being responsible for it. But he said he would not suffer his Royal Highness to speak to the King in private (because he ought to know everything said to his Majesty), still less would he suffer him to lead the King into a cabinet, out of his sight, for 'twas his (the Maréchal's) duty never

to lose sight of his charge, and in everything to answer for it.

Upon this, M. le Duc d'Orléans looked fixedly at the Maréchal and said, in the tone of a master, that he mistook himself and forgot himself; that he ought to remember to whom he was speaking, and take care what words he used; that the respect he (the Regent) owed to the presence of the King, hindered him from replying as he ought to reply, and from continuing this conversation. Therefore he made a profound reverence to the King, and went away.

The Maréchal, thoroughly angry, conducted him some steps, mumbling and gesticulating; M. le Duc d'Orléans pretending to neither see nor hear him, the King astonished, and M. de Fréjus laughing in his sleeve. The bait so well swallowed, no one doubted that the Maréchal, audacious as he was, but nevertheless a servile and timid courtier, would feel all the difference between braving, bearding, and insulting Cardinal Dubois (odious to everybody, and always smelling of the vile egg from which he had been hatched) and wrestling with the Regent in the presence of the King, claiming to annihilate M. le Duc d'Orléans' rights and authority, by appealing to his own pretended rights and authority as governor of the King. People were not mistaken; less than two hours after what had occurred, it was known that the Maréchal, bragging of what he had just done, had added that he should consider himself very unhappy if M. le Duc d'Orléans thought he had been wanting in respect to him, when his only idea was to fulfil his precious duty; and that he would go the next day to have an explanation with his Royal Highness, which he doubted not would be satisfactory to him.

At every hazard, all necessary measures had been taken as soon as the day was fixed on which the snare was to be laid for the Maréchal. Nothing remained but to give form to them directly it was known that on the morrow the Maréchal would come and throw himself into the lion's mouth.

Beyond the bed-room of M. le Duc d'Orléans was a large and fine cabinet, with four big windows looking upon the garden, and on the same floor, two paces distant, two other windows, and two at the side in front of the chimney, and all these windows opened like doors. This cabinet occupied the corner where the courtiers awaited, and behind was an adjoining cabinet, where M. le Duc d'Orléans worked and received distinguished persons or favourites who wished to talk with him.

The word was given. Artagnan, captain of the grey musketeers, was in the room (knowing what was going to happen), with many trusty officers of his company whom he had sent for, and former musketeers to be made use of at a pinch, and who clearly saw by these preparations that something important was in the wind, but without divining what. There were also some light horse posted outside these windows in the same ignorance, and many principal officers and others in the Regent's bed-room, and in the grand cabinet.

All things being well arranged, the Maréchal de Villeroy arrived about mid-day, with his accustomed hubbub, but alone, his chair and porters remaining outside, beyond the Salle des Gardes. He enters like a comedian, stops, looks round, advances some steps. Under pretext of civility, he is environed, surrounded. He asks in an authoritative tone, what M. le Duc d'Orléans is doing: the reply is, he is in his private room within.

The Maréchal elevates his tone, says that nevertheless he must see the Regent; that he is going to enter; when lo! La Fare, captain of M. le Duc d'Orléans' guards, presents himself before him, arrests him, and demands his sword. The Maréchal becomes furious, all present are in commotion. At this instant Le Blanc presents himself. His sedan chair, that had been hidden, is planted before the Maréchal. He cries aloud, he is shaking on his lower limbs; but he is thrust into the chair, which is closed upon him and carried away in the twinkling of an eye through one of the side windows into the garden, La Fare and Artagnan each on one side of the chair, the light horse and musketeers behind, judging only by the result what was in the wind. The march is hastened; the party descend the steps of the orangery by the side of the thicket; the grand gate is found open and a coach and six before it. The chair is put down; the Maréchal storms as he will; he is cast into the coach; Artagnan mounts by his side; an officer of the musketeers is in front; and one of the gentlemen in ordinary of the King by the side of the officer; twenty musketeers, with mounted officers, surround the vehicle, and—away they go.

This side of the garden is beneath the window of the Queen's apartments (when occupied by the Infanta). This scene under the blazing noon-day sun was seen by no one, and although the large number of persons in M. le Duc d'Orléans' rooms soon dispersed, it is astonishing that an affair of this kind remained unknown more than ten hours in the château of Versailles. The servants of the Maréchal de Villeroy (to whom nobody had dared to say a word) still waited with their master's chair near the Salle des Gardes. They were told, after M. le Duc d'Orléans had seen the King, that the Maréchal had gone to

Villeroy, and that they could carry to him what was necessary.

I received at Meudon the message arranged. I was sitting down to table, and it was only towards the supper that people came from Versailles to tell us all the news, which was making much sensation there, but a sensation very measured on account of the surprise and fear caused by the manner in which the arrest had been executed.

It was no agreeable task, that which had to be performed soon after by the Regent; I mean when he carried the news of the arrest to the King. He entered into his Majesty's cabinet, which he cleared of all the company it contained, except those people whose post gave them a right to enter, but of them there were not many present. At the first word, the King reddened; his eyes moistened; he hid his face against the back of an armchair, without saying a word; would neither go out nor play. He ate but a few mouthfuls at supper, wept, and did not sleep all night. The morning and the dinner of the next day, the 14th, passed off but little better.

CHAPTER CXIV

THAT same 14th, as I rose from dinner at Meudon, with much company, the *valet de chambre* who served me said that a courier from Cardinal Dubois had a letter for me, which he had not thought good to bring me before all my guests. I opened the letter. The Cardinal conjured me to go instantly and see him at Versailles, bringing with me a trusty servant, ready to be despatched to La Trappe, as soon as I had spoken with him, and not to rack my brains to divine what this might mean, because it would be impossible to divine it, and that he was waiting with the utmost impatience to tell it to me. I at once ordered my coach, which I thought a long time in coming from the stables. They are a considerable distance from the new château I occupied.

This courier to be taken to the Cardinal, in order to be despatched to La Trappe, turned my head. I could not imagine what had happened to occupy the Cardinal so thoroughly so soon after the arrest of Villeroy. The constitution, or some important and unknown fugitive discovered at La Trappe, and a thousand other thoughts, agitated me until I arrived at Versailles.

Upon reaching the château, I saw Dubois at a window awaiting me, and making many signs to me, and upon reaching the staircase, I found him there at the bottom, as I was about to mount. His first word was to ask me if I had brought with me a man who could post to La Trappe. I showed him my *valet de chambre,* who knew the road well, having trav-

elled over it with me very often, and who was well known to the Cardinal, who, when simple Abbé Dubois, used very frequently to chat with him while waiting for me.

The Cardinal explained to me, as we ascended the stairs, the cause of his message. Immediately after the departure of the Maréchal de Villeroy, M. le Fréjus, the King's instructor, had been missed. He had disappeared. He had not slept at Versailles. No one knew what had become of him! The grief of the King had so much increased upon receiving this fresh blow—both his familiar friends taken from him at once—that no one knew what to do with him. He was in the most violent despair, wept bitterly, and could not be pacified. The Cardinal concluded by saying that no stone must be left unturned in order to find M. de Fréjus. That unless he had gone to Villeroy, it was probable he had hid himself in La Trappe, and that we must send and see. With this he led me to M. le Duc d'Orléans. He was alone, much troubled, walking up and down his chamber, and he said to me that he knew not what would become of the King, or what to do with him; that he was crying for M. de Fréjus, and would listen to nothing; and the Regent began himself to cry out against this strange flight.

After some further consideration, Dubois pressed me to go and write to La Trappe. All was in disorder where we were; everybody spoke at once in the cabinet; it was impossible, in the midst of all this noise, to write upon the bureau, as I often did when I was alone with the King. My apartment was in the new wing, and perhaps shut up, for I was not expected that day. I went therefore, instead, into the chamber of Pezé, close at hand, and wrote my letter there. The letter finished, and I about to descend,

Pezé, who had left me, returned, crying, "He is found! he is found! your letter is useless; return to M. le Duc d'Orléans."

He then related to me that just before, one of M. le Duc d'Orléans' people, who knew that Fréjus was a friend of the Lamoignons, had met Courson in the grand court, and had asked him if he knew what had become of Fréjus; that Courson had replied, "Certainly: he went last night to sleep at Basville, where the President Lamoignon is;" and that upon this, the man hurried Courson to M. le Duc d'Orléans to relate this to him.

Pezé and I arrived at M. le Duc d'Orléans' room just after Courson left it. Serenity had returned. Fréjus was well belaboured. After a moment of cheerfulness, Cardinal Dubois advised M. le Duc d'Orléans to go and carry this good news to the King, and to say that a courier should at once be despatched to Basville, to make his preceptor return. M. le Duc d'Orléans acted upon the suggestion, saying he would return directly. I remained with Dubois awaiting him.

After having discussed a little this mysterious flight of Fréjus, Dubois told me he had news of Villeroy. He said that the Maréchal had not ceased to cry out against the outrage committed upon his person, the audacity of the Regent, the insolence of Dubois, or to hector Artagnan all the way for having lent himself to such criminal violence; then he invoked the Manes of the deceased King, bragged of his confidence in him, the importance of the place he held, and for which he had been preferred above all others; talked of the rising that so impudent an enterprise would cause in Paris, throughout the realm, and in foreign countries; deplored the fate of the young King and of all the kingdom; the officers selected by the late

King for the most precious of charges, driven away; the Duc du Maine first, himself afterwards; then he burst out into exclamations and invectives; then into praises of his services, of his fidelity, of his firmness, of his inviolable attachment to his duty. In fact, he was so astonished, so troubled, so full of vexation and of rage, that he was thoroughly beside himself. The Duc de Villeroy, the Maréchal de Tallard and Biron had permission to go and see him at Villeroy: scarcely anybody else asked for it.

M. le Duc d'Orléans having returned from the King, saying that the news he had carried had much appeased his Majesty, we agreed we must so arrange matters that Fréjus should return the next morning, that M. le Duc d'Orléans should receive him well, as though nothing had happened, and give him to understand that it was simply to avoid embarrassing him, that he had not been made aware of the secret of the arrest (explaining this to him with all the more liberty, because Fréjus hated the Maréchal, his haughtiness, his jealousy, his capriciousness, and in his heart must be delighted at his removal, and at being able to have entire possession of the King), then beg him to explain to the King the necessity of Villeroy's dismissal: then communicate to Fréjus the selection of the Duc de Charost as governor of the King; promise him all the concert and the attention from this latter he could desire; ask him to counsel and guide Charost; finally, seize the moment of the King's joy at the return of Fréjus to inform his Majesty of the new governor chosen, and to present Charost to him. All this was arranged and very well executed next day.

When the Maréchal heard of it at Villeroy, he flew into a strange passion against Charost (of whom he spoke with the utmost contempt for having ac-

cepted his place), but above all against Fréjus, whom he called a traitor and a villain! His first moments of passion, of fury, and of transport, were all the more violent, because he saw by the tranquillity reigning everywhere that his pride had deceived him in inducing him to believe that the Parliament, the markets, all Paris would rise if the Regent dared to touch a person so important and so well beloved as he imagined himself to be. This truth, which he could no longer hide from himself, and which succeeded so rapidly to the chimeras that had been his food and his life, threw him into despair, and turned his head. He fell foul of the Regent, of his minister, of those employed to arrest him, of those who had failed to defend him, of all who had not risen in revolt to bring him back in triumph, of Charost, who had dared to succeed him, and especially of Fréjus, who had deceived him in such an unworthy manner. Fréjus was the person against whom he was the most irritated. Reproaches of ingratitude and of treachery rained unceasingly upon him; all that the Maréchal had done for him with the deceased King was recollected; how he had protected, aided, lodged, and fed him; how without him (Villeroy) he (Fréjus) would never have been preceptor of the King; and all this was exactly true.

The treachery to which he alluded he afterwards explained. He said that he and Fréjus had agreed at the very commencement of the regency to act in union; and that if by troubles or events impossible to foresee, but which were only too common in regencies, one of them should be dismissed from office, the other not being able to hinder the dismissal, though not touched himself, should at once withdraw and never return to his post, until the first was reinstated in his. And after these explanations, new cries broke

out against the perfidy of this miserable wretch—(for the most odious terms ran glibly from the end of his tongue)—who thought like a fool to cover his perfidy with a veil of gauze, in slipping off to Basville, so as to be instantly sought and brought back, in fear lest he should lose his place by the slightest resistance or the slightest delay, and who expected to acquit himself thus of his word, and of the reciprocal engagement both had taken; and then he returned to fresh insults and fury against this serpent, as he said, whom he had warmed and nourished so many years in his bosom.

The account of these transports and insults, promptly came from Villeroy to Versailles, brought, not only by the people whom the Regent had placed as guards over the Maréchal, and to give an exact account of all he said and did, day by day, but by all the domestics who came and went, and before whom Villeroy launched out his speeches, at table, while passing through his ante-chambers, or while taking a turn in his gardens.

All this weighed heavily upon Fréjus by the rebound. Despite the apparent tranquillity of his visage, he appeared confounded. He replied by a silence of respect and commiseration in which he enveloped himself; nevertheless, he could not do so to the Duc de Villeroy, the Maréchal de Tallard, and a few others. He tranquilly said to them, that he had done all he could to fulfil an engagement which he did not deny, but that after having thus satisfied the call of honour, he did not think he could refuse to obey orders so express from the King and the Regent, or abandon the former in order to bring about the return of the Maréchal de Villeroy, which was the object of their reciprocal engagement, and which he was certain he could not effect by absence, however prolonged. But

amidst these very sober excuses could be seen the joy which peeped forth from him, in spite of himself, at being freed from so inconvenient a superior, at having to do with a new governor whom he could easily manage, at being able when he chose to guide himself in all liberty towards the grand object he had always desired, which was to attach himself to the King without reserve, and to make out of this attachment, obtained by all sorts of means, the means of a greatness which he did not yet dare to figure to himself, but which time and opportunity would teach him how to avail himself of in the best manner, marching to it meanwhile in perfect security.

The Maréchal was allowed to refresh himself, and exhale his anger five or six days at Villeroy; and as he was not dangerous away from the King, he was sent to Lyons, with liberty to exercise his functions of governor of the town and province, measures being taken to keep a watch upon him, and Des Libois being left with him to diminish his authority by this manifestation of precaution and surveillance, which took from him all appearance of credit. He would receive no honours on arriving there. A large quantity of his first fire was extinguished; this wide separation from Paris and the Court, where not even the slightest movement had taken place, everybody being stupefied and in terror at an arrest of this importance; took from him all remaining hope, curbed his impetuosity, and finally induced him to conduct himself with sagacity in order to avoid worse treatment.

Such was the catastrophe of a man, so incapable of all the posts he had occupied, who displayed chimeras and audacity in the place of prudence and sagacity, who everywhere appeared a trifler and a comedian, and whose universal and profound ignorance (except of the meanest arts of the courtier) made plainly visi-

ble the thin covering of probity and of virtue with which he tried to hide his ingratitude, his mad ambition, his desire to overturn all in order to make himself the chief of all, in the midst of his weakness and his fears, and to hold a helm he was radically incapable of managing. I speak here only of his conduct since the establishment of the regency. Elsewhere, in more than one place, the little or nothing he was worth has been shown; how his ignorance and his jealousy lost us Flanders, and nearly ruined the State; how his felicity was pushed to the extreme, and what deplorable reverses followed his return. Sufficient to say that he never recovered from the state into which this last madness threw him, and that the rest of his life was only bitterness, regret, contempt! He had persuaded the King that it was he, alone, who by vigilance and precaution had preserved his life from poison that others wished to administer to him. This was the source of those tears shed by the King when Villeroy was carried off, and of his despair when Fréjus disappeared. He did not doubt that both had been removed in order that this crime might be more easily committed.

The prompt return of Fréjus dissipated the half of his fear, the continuance of his good health delivered him by degrees from the other. The preceptor, who had a great interest in preserving the King, and who felt much relieved by the absence of Villeroy, left nothing undone in order to extinguish these gloomy ideas; and consequently to let blame fall upon him who had inspired them. He feared the return of the Maréchal when the King, who was approaching his majority, should be the master; once delivered of the yoke he did not wish it to be reimposed upon him. He well knew that the grand airs, the ironies, the authoritative fussiness in public of the

Maréchal were insupportable to his Majesty, and that they held together only by those frightful ideas of poison. To destroy them was to show the Maréchal uncovered, and worse than that to show to the King, without appearing to make a charge against the Maréchal, the criminal interest he had in exciting these alarms, and the falsehood and atrocity of such a venomous invention. These reflections, which the health of the King each day confirmed, sapped all esteem, all gratitude, and left his Majesty in full liberty of conscience to prohibit, when he should be the master, all approach to his person on the part of so vile and so interested an impostor.

Fréjus made use of these means to shelter himself against the possibility of the Maréchal's return, and to attach himself to the King without reserve. The prodigious success of his schemes has been only too well felt since.

The banishment of Villeroy, flight and return of Fréjus, and installation of Charost as governor of the King, were followed by the confirmation of his Majesty by the Cardinal de Rohan, and by his first communion, administered to him by this self-same Cardinal, his grand almoner.

CHAPTER CXV

VILLEROY being banished, the last remaining obstacle in Dubois' path was removed. There was nothing, now, to hinder him from being proclaimed prime minister. I had opposed it as stoutly as I could; but my words were lost upon M. le Duc d'Orléans. Accordingly, about two o'clock in the afternoon of the 23rd of August, 1722, Dubois was declared prime minister by the Regent, and by the Regent at once conducted to the King as such.

After this event I began insensibly to withdraw from public affairs. Before the end of the year the King was consecrated at Rheims. The disorder at the ceremony was inexpressible. All precedent was forgotten. Rank was hustled and jostled, so to speak, by the crowd. The desire to exclude the nobility from all office and all dignity was obvious, at half a glance. My spirit was ulcerated at this; I saw approaching the complete re-establishment of the bastards; my heart was cleft in twain, to see the Regent at the heels of his unworthy minister. He was a prey to the interest, the avarice, the folly, of this miserable wretch, and no remedy possible. Whatever experience I might have had of the astonishing weakness of M. le Duc d'Orléans, it had passed all bounds when I saw him with my own eyes make Dubois prime minister, after all I had said to him on the subject,—after all he had said to me. The year 1723 commenced, and found me in this spirit. It is at the end of this year I have determined to end those

memoirs, and the details of it will not be so full or so abundant as of preceding years. I was hopelessly wearied with M. le Duc d'Orléans; I no longer approached this poor prince (with so many great and useless talents buried in him)—except with repugnance. I could not help feeling for him what the poor Israelites said to themselves in the desert about the manna: "*Nauseat anima mea super cibum istum levissimum.*" I no longer deigned to speak to him. He perceived this: I felt he was pained at it; he strove to reconcile me to him, without daring, however, to speak of affairs, except briefly, and with constraint, and yet he could not hinder himself from speaking of them. I scarcely took the trouble to reply to him, and I cut his conversation as short as possible. I abridged and curtailed my audiences with him; I listened to his reproaches with coldness. In fact, what had I to discuss with a Regent who was no longer one, not even over himself, still less over a realm plunged in disorder?

Cardinal Dubois, when he met me, almost courted me. He knew not how to catch me. The bonds which united me to M. le Duc d'Orléans had always been so strong that the prime minister, who knew their strength, did not dare to flatter himself he could break them. His resource was to try to disgust me by inducing his master to treat me with a reserve which was completely new to him, and which cost him more than it cost me; for, in fact, he had often found my confidence very useful to him, and had grown accustomed to it. As for me, I dispensed with his friendship more than willingly, vexed at being no longer able to gather any fruit from it for the advantage of the State or himself, wholly abandoned as he was to his Paris pleasures and to his minister. The conviction of my complete inutility more and more kept

me in the background, without the slightest suspicion that different conduct could be dangerous to me, or that, weak and abandoned to Dubois as was the Regent, the former could ever exile me, like the Duc de Noailles, and Canillac, or disgust me into exiling myself. I followed, then, my accustomed life. That is to say, never saw M. le Duc d'Orléans except *tête-à-tête,* and then very seldom at intervals that each time grew longer, coldly, briefly, never talking to him of business, or, if he did to me, turning the conversation, and replying in a manner to make it drop. Acting thus, it is easy to see that I was mixed up in nothing, and what I shall have to relate now will have less of the singularity and instructiveness of good and faithful memoirs, than of the dryness and sterility of the gazettes.

First of all I will finish my account of Cardinal Dubois. I have very little more to say of him; for he had scarcely begun to enjoy his high honours when Death came to laugh at him for the sweating labour he had taken to acquire them.

On the 11th of June, 1723, the King went to reside at Meudon, ostensibly in order that the château of Versailles might be cleared—in reality, to accommodate Cardinal Dubois. He had just presided over the assembly of the day, and flattered to the last degree at this, wished to repose upon the honour. He desired, also, to be present sometimes at the assemblies of the Company of the Indies. Meudon brought him half-way to Paris, and saved him a journey. His debauchery had so shattered his health that the movement of a coach gave him pains which he very carefully hid.

The King held at Meudon a review of his household, which in his pride the Cardinal must needs attend. It cost him dear. He mounted on horseback

the better to enjoy his triumph; he suffered cruelly, and became so violently ill that he was obliged to have assistance. The most celebrated doctors and physicians were called in, with great secrecy. They shook their heads, and came so often that news of the illness began to transpire. Dubois was unable to go to Paris again more than once or twice, and then with much trouble, and solely to conceal his malady, which gave him no repose.

He left nothing undone, in fact, to hide it from the world; he went as often as he could to the council; apprised the ambassadors he would go to Paris, and did not go; kept himself invisible at home, and bestowed the most frightful abuse upon everybody who dared to intrude upon him. On Saturday, the 7th of August, he was so ill that the doctors declared he must submit to an operation, which was very urgent, and without which he could hope to live but a few days; because the abscess he had having burst the day he mounted on horseback, gangrene had commenced, with an overflow of pus, and he must be transported, they added, to Versailles, in order to undergo this operation. The trouble this terrible announcement caused him, so overthrew him that he could not be moved the next day, Sunday, the 8th; but on Monday he was transported in a litter, at five o'clock in the morning.

After having allowed him to repose himself a little, the doctors and surgeons proposed that he should receive the sacrament, and submit to the operation immediately after. This was not heard very peacefully; he had scarcely ever been free from fury since the day of the review; he had grown worse on Saturday, when the operation was first announced to him. Nevertheless, some little time after, he sent for a priest from Versailles, with whom he remained alone about

a quarter of an hour. Such a great and good man, so well prepared for death, did not need more. Prime ministers, too, have privileged confessions. As his chamber again filled, it was proposed that he should take the viaticum; he cried out that that was soon said, but that there was a ceremonial for the cardinals, of which he was ignorant, and Cardinal Bissy must be sent to, at Paris, for information upon it. Everybody looked at his neighbour, and felt that Dubois merely wished to gain time; but as the operation was urgent, they proposed it to him without further delay. He furiously sent them away, and would no longer hear talk of it.

The faculty, who saw the imminent danger of the slightest delay, sent to Meudon for M. le Duc d'Orléans, who instantly came in the first conveyance he could lay his hands on. He exhorted the Cardinal to suffer the operation; then asked the faculty if it could be performed in safety. They replied that they could say nothing for certain, but that assuredly the Cardinal had not two hours to live if he did not instantly agree to it. M. le Duc d'Orléans returned to the sick man, and begged him so earnestly to do so, that he consented.

The operation was accordingly performed about five o'clock, and in five minutes, by La Peyronie, chief surgeon of the King, and successor to Maréchal, who was present with Chirac and others of the most celebrated surgeons and doctors. The Cardinal cried and stormed strongly. M. le Duc d'Orléans returned into the chamber directly after the operation was performed, and the faculty did not dissimulate from him that, judging by the nature of the wound, and what had issued from it, the Cardinal had not long to live. He died, in fact, twenty-four hours afterwards, on the 10th of August, at five o'clock in the morning, grind-

ing his teeth against his surgeons and against Chirac, whom he had never ceased to abuse.

Extreme unction was, however, brought to him. Of the communion, nothing more was said—or of any priest for him—and he finished his life thus, in the utmost despair, and enraged at quitting it. Fortune had nicely played with him; she made him dearly and slowly buy her favours by all sorts of trouble, care, projects, intrigues, fears, labour, torment; and at last showered down upon him torrents of greater power, unmeasured riches, to let him enjoy them only four years (dating from the time when he was made Secretary of State, and only two years dating from the time when he was made Cardinal and Prime Minister), and then snatched them from him, in the smiling moment when he was most enjoying them, at sixty-six years of age.

He died thus, absolute master of his master, less a prime minister than an all-powerful minister, exercising in full and undisturbed liberty the authority and the power of the King; he was superintendent of the post, Cardinal, Archbishop of Cambrai, had seven abbeys, with respect to which he was insatiable to the last; and he had set on foot overtures in order to seize upon those of Citeaux, Prémonté, and others, and it was averred that he received a pension from England of 40,000 livres sterling! I had the curiosity to ascertain his revenue, and I have thought what I found curious enough to be inserted here, diminishing some of the benefices to avoid all exaggeration. I have made a reduction, too, upon what he drew from his place of prime minister, and that of the post. I believe, also, that he had 20,000 livres from the clergy, as Cardinal, but I do not know it as certain. What he drew from Law was immense. He had made use of a good deal of it at Rome, in

order to obtain his Cardinalship; but a prodigious sum of ready cash was left in his hands. He had an extreme quantity of the most beautiful plate in silver and enamel, most admirably worked; the richest furniture, the rarest jewels of all kinds, the finest and rarest horses of all countries, and the most superb equipages. His table was in every way exquisite and superb, and he did the honours of it very well, although extremely sober by nature and by régime.

The place of preceptor of M. le Duc d'Orléans had procured for him the Abbey of Nogent-sous-Coucy; the marriage of the Prince that of Saint-Just; his first journeys to Hanover and England, those of Airvause and of Bourgueil: three other journeys, his omnipotence. What a monster of Fortune! With what a commencement, and with what an end!

ACCOUNT OF HIS RICHES.

Cambrai	120,000	livres
Nogent-sous-Coucy	10,000	"
Saint-Just	10,000	"
Airvause	12,000	"
Bourgueil	12,000	"
Berg-Saint-Vinox	60,000	"
Saint-Bertin	80,000	"
Cercamp	20,000	"
	324,000	"
Prime Minister	150,000	"
The Post	100,000	"
	250,000	"
The Pension from England, at 24 livres the livre sterling	960,000	"

TOTALS.

Benefices	324,000	"
Prime Minister and Post	250,000	"
Pension from England	960,000	"
	1,534,000	"

On Wednesday evening, the day after his death, Dubois was carried from Versailles to the church of the chapter of Saint-Honoré, in Paris, where he was interred some days after. Each of the academies of which he was a member had a service performed for him (at which they were present), the assembly of the clergy had another (he being their president), and as prime minister he had one at Notre Dame, at which the Cardinal de Noailles officiated, and at which the superior courts were present. There was no funeral oration at any of them. It could not be hazarded. His brother, more modest than he, and an honest man, kept the office of secretary of the cabinet, which he had, and which the Cardinal had given him. This brother found an immense heritage. He had but one son, canon of Saint-Honoré, who had never desired places or livings, and who led a good life. He would touch scarcely anything of this rich succession. He employed a part of it in building for his uncle a sort of mausoleum (fine, but very modest, against the wall, at the end of the church, where the Cardinal is interred, with a Christian-like inscription), and distributed the rest to the poor, fearing lest this money should bring a curse upon him.

It was found some time after his death that the Cardinal had been long married, but very obscurely! He paid his wife to keep silent when he received his benefices; but when he dawned into greatness became much embarrassed with her. He was always in agony lest she should come forward and ruin him. His marriage had been made in Limousin, and celebrated in a village church. When he was named Archbishop of Cambrai he resolved to destroy the proofs of this marriage, and employed Breteuil, Intendant of Limoges, to whom he committed the secret, to do this for him skilfully and quietly.

Breteuil saw the heavens open before him if he could but succeed in this enterprise, so delicate and so important. He had intelligence, and knew how to make use of it. He goes to this village where the marriage had been celebrated, accompanied by only two or three valets, and arranges his journey so as to arrive at night, stops at the curé's house, in default of an inn, familiarly claims hospitality like a man surprised by the night, dying of hunger and thirst, and unable to go a step further.

The good curé, transported with gladness to lodge M. l'Intendant, hastily prepared all there was in the house, and had the honour of supping with him, whilst his servant regaled the two valets in another room, Breteuil having sent them all away in order to be alone with his host. Breteuil liked his glass and knew how to empty it. He pretended to find the supper good and the wine better. The curé, charmed with his guest, thought only of egging him on, as they say in the provinces. The tankard was on the table, and was drained again and again with a familiarity which transported the worthy priest. Breteuil, who had laid his project, succeeded in it, and made the good man so drunk that he could not keep upright, or see, or utter a word. When Breteuil had brought him to this state, and had finished him off with a few more draughts of wine, he profited by the information he had extracted from him during the first quarter of an hour of supper. He had asked if his registers were in good order, and how far they extended, and under pretext of safety against thieves, asked him where he kept them, and the keys of them, so that the moment Breteuil was certain the curé could no longer make use of his senses, he took his keys, opened the cupboard, took from it the register of the marriage of the year he wanted, very neatly

detached the page he sought (and woe unto that marriage registered upon the same page), put it in his pocket, replaced the registers where he had found them, locked up the cupboard, and put back the keys in the place he had taken them from. His only thought after this was to steal off as soon as the dawn appeared, leaving the good curé snoring away the effects of the wine, and giving some pistoles to the servant.

He went thence to the notary, who had succeeded to the business and the papers of the one who had made the contract of marriage; locked himself up with him, and by force and authority made him give up the minutes of the marriage contract. He sent afterwards for the wife of Dubois (from whose hands the wily Cardinal had already obtained the copy of the contract she possessed), threatened her with dreadful dungeons if she ever dared to breathe a word of her marriage, and promised marvels to her if she kept silent.

He assured her, moreover, that all she could say or do would be thrown away, because everything had been so arranged that she could prove nothing, and that if she dared to speak, preparations were made for condemning her as a calumniator and impostor, to rot with a shaven head in the prison of a convent! Breteuil placed these two important documents in the hands of Dubois, and was (to the surprise and scandal of all the world) recompensed, some time after, with the post of war secretary, which, apparently, he had done nothing to deserve, and for which he was utterly unqualified. The secret reason of his appointment was not discovered until long after.

Dubois' wife did not dare to utter a whisper. She came to Paris after the death of her husband. A good proportion was given to her of what was left. She

lived obscure, but in easy circumstances, and died at Paris more than twenty years after the Cardinal Dubois, by whom she had had no children. The brother lived on very good terms with her. He was a village doctor when Dubois sent for him to Paris. In the end this history was known, and has been neither contradicted nor disavowed by anybody.

We have many examples of prodigious fortune acquired by insignificant people, but there is no example of a person so destitute of all talent (excepting that of low intrigue), as was Cardinal Dubois, being thus fortunate. His intellect was of the most ordinary kind; his knowledge the most common-place; his capacity nil; his exterior that of a ferret, of a pedant; his conversation disagreeable, broken, always uncertain; his falsehood written upon his forehead; his habits too measureless to be hidden; his fits of impetuosity resembling fits of madness; his head incapable of containing more than one thing at a time, and he incapable of following anything but his personal interest; nothing was sacred with him; he had no sort of worthy intimacy with any one; had a declared contempt for faith, promises, honour, probity, truth; took pleasure at laughing at all these things; was equally voluptuous and ambitious, wishing to be all in all in everything; counting himself alone as everything, and whatever was not connected with him as nothing; and regarding it as the height of madness to think or act otherwise. With all this he was soft, cringing, supple, a flatterer, and false admirer, taking all shapes with the greatest facility, and playing the most opposite parts in order to arrive at the different ends he proposed to himself; and nevertheless was but little capable of seducing. His judgment acted by fits and starts, was involuntarily crooked, with little sense or clearness; he was disagreeable in

spite of himself. Nevertheless, he could be funnily vivacious when he wished, but nothing more, could tell a good story, spoiled, however, to some extent by his stuttering, which his falsehood had turned into a habit from the hesitation he always had in replying and in speaking. With such defects it is surprising that the only man he was able to seduce was M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had so much intelligence, such a well-balanced mind, and so much clear and rapid perception of character. Dubois gained upon him as a child while his preceptor; he seized upon him as a young man by favouring his liking for liberty, sham fashionable manners and debauchery, and his disdain of all rule. He ruined his heart, his mind, and his habits, by instilling into him the principles of libertinism, which this poor prince could no more deliver himself from than from those ideas of reason, truth, and conscience which he always took care to stifle.

Dubois having insinuated himself into the favour of his master in this manner, was incessantly engaged in studying how to preserve his position. He never lost sight of his prince, whose great talents and great defects he had learnt how to profit by. The Regent's feebleness was the main rock upon which he built. As for Dubois' talent and capacity, as I have before said, they were worth nothing. All his success was due to his servile pliancy and base intrigues.

When he became the real master of the State he was just as incompetent as before. All his application was directed towards his master, and it had for sole aim that that master should not escape him. He wearied himself in watching all the movements of the prince, what he did, whom he saw, and for how long; his humour, his visage, his remarks at the issue

of every audience and of every party; who took part in them, what was said and by whom, combining all these things; above all, he strove to frighten everybody from approaching the Regent, and kept no bounds with any one who had the temerity to do so without his knowledge and permission. This watching occupied all his days, and by it he regulated all his movements. This application, and the orders he was obliged to give for appearance sake, occupied all his time, so that he became inaccessible except for a few public audiences, or for others to the foreign ministers. Yet the majority of those ministers never could catch him, and were obliged to lie in wait for him upon staircases or in passages, where he did not expect to meet them. Once he threw into the fire a prodigious quantity of unopened letters, and then congratulated himself upon having got rid of all his business at once. At his death thousands of letters were found unopened.

Thus everything was in arrear, and nobody, not even the foreign ministers, dared to complain to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, entirely abandoned to his pleasures, and always on the road from Versailles to Paris, never thought of business, only too satisfied to find himself so free, and attending to nothing except the few trifles he submitted to the King under the pretence of working with his Majesty. Thus, nothing could be settled, and all was in chaos. To govern in this manner there is no need for capacity. Two words to each minister charged with a department, and some care in garnishing the councils attended by the King, with the least important despatches (settling the others with M. le Duc d'Orléans) constituted all the labour of the prime minister; and spying, scheming, parade, flatteries, defence, occupied all his time. His fits of passion, full of insults and

blackguardism, from which neither man nor woman, no matter of what rank, was sheltered, relieved him from an infinite number of audiences, because people preferred going to subalterns, or neglecting their business altogether, to exposing themselves to this fury and these affronts.

The mad freaks of Dubois, especially when he had become master, and thrown off all restraint, would fill a volume. I will relate only one or two as samples. His frenzy was such that he would sometimes run all round the chamber, upon the tables and chairs, without touching the floor! M. le Duc d'Orléans told me that he had often witnessed this.

Another sample:

The Cardinal de Gesvres came over to-day to complain to M. le Duc d'Orléans that the Cardinal Dubois had dismissed him in the most filthy terms. On a former occasion, Dubois had treated the Princesse de Montauban in a similar manner, and M. le Duc d'Orléans had replied to her complaints as he now replied to those of the Cardinal de Gesvres. He told the Cardinal, who was a man of good manners, of gravity, and of dignity (whereas the Princess deserved what she got) that he had always found the counsel of the Cardinal Dubois good, and that he thought he (Gesvres) would do well to follow the advice just given him! Apparently it was to free himself from similar complaints that he spoke thus; and, in fact, he had no more afterwards.

Another sample:—

Madame de Cheverny, become a widow, had retired to the Incurables. Her place of governess of the daughters of M. le Duc d'Orléans had been given to Madame de Conflans. A little while after Dubois was consecrated, Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans asked Madame de Conflans if she had called upon

him. Thereupon Madame de Conflans replied negatively and that she saw no reason for going, the place she held being so little mixed up in State affairs. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans pointed out how intimate the Cardinal was with M. le Duc d'Orléans. Madame de Conflans still tried to back out, saying that he was a madman, who insulted everybody, and to whom she would not expose herself. She had wit and a tongue, and was supremely vain, although very polite. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans burst out laughing at her fear, and said, that having nothing to ask of the Cardinal, but simply to render an account to him of the office M. le Duc d'Orléans had given her, it was an act of politeness which could only please him, and obtain for her his regard, far from having anything disagreeable, or to be feared about it; and finished by saying to her that it was proper, and that she wished her to go.

She went, therefore, for it was at Versailles, and arrived in a large cabinet, where there were eight or ten persons waiting to speak to the Cardinal, who was larking with one of his favourites, by the mantelpiece. Fear seized upon Madame de Conflans, who was little, and who appeared less. Nevertheless, she approached as this woman retired. The Cardinal, seeing her advance, sharply asked her what she wanted.

"Monseigneur," said she,—"Oh, Monseigneur!"

"Monseigneur," interrupted the Cardinal, "I can't now."

"But, Monseigneur," replied she,—

"Now, devil take me, I tell you again," interrupted the Cardinal, "when I say I can't, I can't."

"Monseigneur," Madame de Conflans again said, in order to explain that she wanted nothing; but at

this word the Cardinal seized her by the shoulders, and pushed her out, saying,

"Go to the devil, and let me alone."

She nearly fell over, flew away in fury, weeping hot tears, and reached, in this state, Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, to whom, through her sobs, she related the adventure.

People were so accustomed to the insults of the Cardinal, and this was thought so singular and so amusing, that the recital of it caused shouts of laughter, which finished off poor Madame de Conflans, who swore that, never in her life, would she put foot in the house of this madman.

The Easter Sunday after he was made Cardinal, Dubois woke about eight o'clock, rang his bells as though he would break them, called for his people with the most horrible blasphemies, vomited forth a thousand filthy expressions and insults, raved at everybody because he had not been awakened, said that he wanted to say mass, but knew not how to find time, occupied as he was. After this very beautiful preparation, he very wisely abstained from saying mass, and I don't know whether he ever did say it after his consecration.

He had taken for private secretary one Verrier, whom he had unfrocked from the Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, the business of which he had conducted for twenty years, with much cleverness and intelligence. He soon accommodated himself to the humours of the Cardinal, and said to him all he pleased.

One morning he was with the Cardinal, who asked for something that could not at once be found. Thereupon Dubois began to blaspheme, to storm against his clerks, saying that if he had not enough he would engage twenty, thirty, fifty, a hundred, and

making the most frightful din. Verrier tranquilly listened to him. The Cardinal asked him if it was not a terrible thing to be so ill-served, considering the expense he was put to; then broke out again, and pressed him to reply.

"Monseigneur," said Verrier, "engage one more clerk, and give him, for sole occupation, to swear and storm for you, and all will go well; you will have much more time to yourself and will be better served."

The Cardinal burst out laughing, and was appeased.

Every evening he ate an entire chicken for his supper. I know not by whose carelessness, but this chicken was forgotten one evening by his people. As he was about to go to bed he bethought him of his bird, rang, cried out, stormed against his servants, who ran and coolly listened to him. Upon this he cried the more, and complained of not having been served. He was astonished when they replied to him that he had eaten his chicken, but that if he pleased they would put another down to the spit.

"What!" said he, "I have eaten my chicken!" The bold and cool assertion of his people persuaded him, and they laughed at him.

I will say no more, because, I repeat it, volumes might be filled with these details. I have said enough to show what was this monstrous personage, whose death was a relief to great and little, to all Europe, even to his brother, whom he treated like a negro. He wanted to dismiss a groom on one occasion for having lent one of his coaches to this same brother, to go somewhere in Paris.

The most relieved of all was M. le Duc d'Orléans. For a long time he had groaned in secret beneath the weight of a domination so harsh, and of chains he had forged for himself. Not only he could no longer dispose or decide upon anything, but he could

get the Cardinal to do nothing, great or small, he desired done. He was obliged, in everything, to follow the will of the Cardinal, who became furious, reproached him, and stormed at him when too much contradicted. The poor Prince felt thus the abandonment into which he had cast himself, and, by this abandonment, the power of the Cardinal, and the eclipse of his own power. He feared him; Dubois had become insupportable to him; he was dying with desire, as was shown in a thousand things, to get rid of him, but he dared not—he did not know how to set about it; and, isolated and unceasingly wretched as he was, there was nobody to whom he could unbosom himself; and the Cardinal, well informed of this, increased his freaks, so as to retain by fear what he had usurped by artifice, and what he no longer hoped to preserve in any other way.

As soon as Dubois was dead, M. le Duc d'Orléans returned to Meudon, to inform the King of the event. The King immediately begged him to charge himself with the management of public affairs, declared him prime minister, and received, the next day, his oath, the patent of which was immediately sent to the Parliament, and verified. This prompt declaration was caused by the fear Fréjus had to see a private person prime minister. The King liked M. le Duc d'Orléans, as we have already seen by the respect he received from him, and by his manner of working with him. The Regent, without danger of being taken at his word, always left him master of all favours, and of the choice of persons he proposed to him; and, besides, never bothered him, or allowed business to interfere with his amusements. In spite of all the care and all the suppleness Dubois had employed in order to gain the spirit of the King, he never could succeed, and people remarked, without having won-

derful eyes, a very decided repugnance of the King for him. The Cardinal was afflicted, but redoubled his efforts, in the hope at last of success. But, in addition to his own disagreeable manners, heightened by the visible efforts he made to please, he had two enemies near the King, very watchful to keep him away from the young prince—the Maréchal de Villeroy, while he was there, and Fréjus, who was much more dangerous, and who was resolved to overthrow him. Death, as we have seen, spared him the trouble.

The Court returned from Meudon to Paris on the 13th of August. Soon after I met M. le Duc d'Orléans there.

As soon as he saw me enter his cabinet he ran to me, and eagerly asked me if I meant to abandon him. I replied that while his Cardinal lived I felt I should be useless to him, but that now this obstacle was removed, I should always be very humbly at his service. He promised to live with me on the same terms as before, and, without a word upon the Cardinal, began to talk about home and foreign affairs. If I flattered myself that I was to be again of use to him for any length of time, events soon came to change the prospect. But I will not anticipate my story.

CHAPTER CXVI

THE Duc de Lauzun died on the 19th of November, at the age of ninety years and six months. The intimate union of the two sisters I and he had espoused, and our continual intercourse at the Court (at Marly, we had a pavilion especially for us four), caused me to be constantly with him, and after the King's death we saw each other nearly every day at Paris, and unceasingly frequented each other's table. He was so extraordinary a personage, in every way so singular, that La Bruyère, with much justice, says of him in his "Characters," that others were not allowed to dream as he had lived. For those who saw him in his old age, this description seems even more just. That is what induces me to dwell upon him here. He was of the House of Caumont, the branch of which represented by the Ducs de la Force has always passed for the eldest, although that of Lauzun has tried to dispute with it.

The mother of M. de Lauzun was daughter of the Duc de la Force, son of the second Maréchal Duc de la Force, and brother of the Maréchale de Turenne, but by another marriage; the Maréchale was by a first marriage. The father of M. de Lauzun was the Comte de Lauzun, cousin-german of the first Maréchal Duc de Grammont, and of the old Comte de Grammont.

M. de Lauzun was a little fair man, of good figure, with a noble and expressively commanding face, but which was without charm, as I have heard people say who knew him when he was young. He was full of ambition, of caprice, of fancies; jealous of

all; wishing always to go too far; never content with anything; had no reading, a mind in no way cultivated, and without charm; naturally sorrowful, fond of solitude, uncivilised; very noble in his dealings, disagreeable and malicious by nature, still more so by jealousy and by ambition; nevertheless, a good friend when a friend at all, which was rare; a good relative; enemy even of the indifferent; hard upon faults, and upon what was ridiculous, which he soon discovered; extremely brave, and as dangerously bold. As a courtier he was equally insolent and satirical, and as cringing as a valet; full of foresight, perseverance, intrigue, and meanness, in order to arrive at his ends; with this, dangerous to the ministers; at the Court feared by all, and full of witty and sharp remarks which spared nobody.

He came very young to the Court without any fortune, a cadet of Gascony, under the name of the Marquis de Puyguilhem. The Maréchal de Grammont, cousin-german of his brother, lodged him. Grammont was then in high consideration at the Court, enjoyed the confidence of the Queen-mother, and of Cardinal Mazarin, and had the regiment of the guards and the reversion of it for the Comte de Guiche, his eldest son, who, the prince of brave fellows, was on his side in great favour with the ladies, and far advanced in the good graces of the King and of the Comtesse de Soissons, niece of the Cardinal, whom the King never quitted, and who was the Queen of the Court. This Comte de Guiche introduced to the Comtesse de Soissons the Marquis de Puyguilhem, who in a very little time became the King's favourite. The King, in fact, gave him his regiment of dragoons on forming it, and soon after made him Maréchal de Camp, and created for him the post of colonel-general of dragoons.

The Duc de Mazarin, who in 1669 had already retired from the Court, wished to get rid of his post of grand master of the artillery; Puyguilhem had scent of his intention, and asked the King for this office. The King promised it to him, but on condition that he kept the matter secret some days. The day arrived on which the King had agreed to declare him. Puyguilhem, who had the *entrées* of the first gentleman of the chamber (which are also named the *grandes entrées*), went to wait for the King (who was holding a finance council), in a room that nobody entered during the council, between that in which all the Court waited, and that in which the council itself was held. He found there no one but Nyert, chief *valet de chambre,* who asked him how he happened to come there. Puyguilhem, sure of his affair, thought he should make a friend of this valet by confiding to him what was about to take place. Nyert expressed his joy; then drawing out his watch, said he should have time to go and execute a pressing commission the King had given him. He mounted four steps at a time the little staircase, at the head of which was the bureau where Louvois worked all day—for at Saint-Germain the lodgings were little and few—and the ministers and nearly all the Court lodged each at his own house in the town. Nyert entered the bureau of Louvois, and informed him that upon leaving the council (of which Louvois was not a member), the King was going to declare Puyguilhem grand master of the artillery, adding that he had just learned this news from Puyguilhem himself, and saying where he had left him.

Louvois hated Puyguilhem, friend of Colbert, his rival, and he feared his influence in a post which had so many intimate relations with his department of the war, the functions and authority of which he invaded

as much as possible, a proceeding which he felt Puyguilhem was not the kind of man to suffer. He embraces Nyert, thanking him, dismisses him as quickly as possible, takes some papers to serve as an excuse, descends, and finds Puyguilhem and Nyert in the chamber, as above described. Nyert pretends to be surprised to see Louvois arrive, and says to him that the council has not broken up.

"No matter," replied Louvois, "I must enter. I have something important to say to the King;" and thereupon he enters. The King, surprised to see him, asks what brings him there, rises, and goes to him. Louvois draws him into the embrasure of a window, and says he knows that his Majesty is going to declare Puyguilhem grand master of the artillery; that he is waiting in the adjoining room for the breaking up of the council; that his Majesty is fully master of his favours and of his choice, but that he (Louvois) thinks it his duty to represent to him the incompatibility between Puyguilhem and him, his caprices, his pride; that he will wish to change everything in the artillery; that this post has such intimate relations with the war department, that continual quarrels will arise between the two, with which his Majesty will be importuned at every moment.

The King is piqued to see his secret known by him from whom, above all, he wished to hide it; he replies to Louvois, with a very serious air, that the appointment is not yet made, dismisses him, and reseats himself at the council. A moment after it breaks up. The King leaves to go to mass, sees Puyguilhem, and passes without saying anything to him. Puyguilhem, much astonished, waits all the rest of the day, and seeing that the promised declaration does not come, speaks of it to the King at night. The King replies to him that it cannot be yet, and that

he will see; the ambiguity of the response, and the cold tone, alarm Puyguilhem; he is in favour with the ladies, and speaks the jargon of gallantry; he goes to Madame de Montespan, to whom he states his disquietude, and conjures her to put an end to it. She promises him wonders, and amuses him thus several days.

Tired of this, and not being able to divine whence comes his failure, he takes a resolution—incredible if it was not attested by all the Court of that time. The King was in the habit of visiting Madame de Montespan in the afternoon, and of remaining with her some time. Puyguilhem was on terms of tender intimacy with one of the chambermaids of Madame de Montespan. She privately introduced him into the room where the King visited Madame de Montespan, and he secreted himself under the bed. In this position he was able to hear all the conversation that took place between the King and his mistress above, and he learned by it that it was Louvois who had ousted him; that the King was very angry at the secret having got wind, and had changed his resolution to avoid quarrels between the artillery and the war department; and, finally, that Madame de Montespan, who had promised him her good offices, was doing him all the harm she could. A cough, the least movement, the slightest accident, might have betrayed the foolhardy Puyguilhem, and then what would have become of him? These are things the recital of which takes the breath away, and terrifies at the same time.

Puyguilhem was more fortunate than prudent, and was not discovered. The King and his mistress at last closed their conversation; the King dressed himself again, and went to his own rooms. Madame de Montespan went away to her toilette, in order to prepare for the rehearsal of a ballet to which the

King, the Queen, and all the Court were going. The chambermaid drew Puyguilhem from under the bed, and he went and glued himself against the door of Madame de Montespan's chamber.

When Madame de Montespan came forth, in order to go to the rehearsal of the ballet, he presented his hand to her, and asked her, with an air of gentleness and of respect, if he might flatter himself that she had deigned to think of him when with the King. She assured him that she had not failed, and enumerated services she had, she said, just rendered him. Here and there he credulously interrupted her with questions, the better to entrap her; then, drawing near her, he told her she was a liar, a hussy, a harlot, and repeated to her, word for word, her conversation with the King!

Madame de Montespan was so amazed that she had not strength enough to reply one word; with difficulty she reached the place she was going to, and with difficulty overcame and hid the trembling of her legs and of her whole body; so that upon arriving at the room where the rehearsal was to take place, she fainted. All the Court was already there. The King, in great fright, came to her; it was not without much trouble she was restored to herself. The same evening she related to the King what had just happened, never doubting it was the devil who had so promptly and so precisely informed Puyguilhem of all that she had said to the King. The King was extremely irritated at the insult Madame de Montespan had received, and was much troubled to divine how Puyguilhem had been so exactly and so suddenly instructed.

Puyguilhem, on his side, was furious at losing the artillery, so that the King and he were under strange constraint together. This could last only a few days. Puyguilhem, with his *grandes entrées,* seized his op-

portunity and had a private audience with the King. He spoke to him of the artillery, and audaciously summoned him to keep his word. The King replied that he was not bound by it, since he had given it under secrecy, which he (Puyguilhem) had broken.

Upon this Puyguilhem retreats a few steps, turns his back upon the King, draws his sword, breaks the blade of it with his foot, and cries out in fury, that he will never in his life serve a prince who has so shamefully broken his word. The King, transported with anger, performed in that moment the finest action perhaps of his life. He instantly turned round, opened the window, threw his cane outside, said he should be sorry to strike a man of quality, and left the room.

The next morning, Puyguilhem, who had not dared to show himself since, was arrested in his chamber, and conducted to the Bastille. He was an intimate friend of Guitz, favourite of the King, for whom his Majesty had created the post of grand master of the wardrobe. Guitz had the courage to speak to the King in favour of Puyguilhem, and to try and re-awaken the infinite liking he had conceived for the young Gascon. He succeeded so well in touching the King, by showing him that the refusal of such a grand post as the artillery had turned Puyguilhem's head, that his Majesty wished to make amends for this refusal. He offered the post of captain of the King's guards to Puyguilhem, who, seeing this incredible and prompt return of favour, re-assumed sufficient audacity to refuse it, flattering himself he should thus gain a better appointment. The King was not discouraged. Guitz went and preached to his friend in the Bastille, and with great trouble made him agree to have the goodness to accept the King's offer. As soon as he had accepted it he left the

Bastille, went and saluted the King, and took the oaths of his new post, selling that which he occupied in the dragoons.

He had in 1665 the government of Berry, at the death of Maréchal de Clerembault. I will not speak here of his adventures with Mademoiselle, which she herself so naïvely relates in her memoirs, or of his extreme folly in delaying his marriage with her (to which the King had consented), in order to have fine liveries, and get the marriage celebrated at the King's mass, which gave time to Monsieur (incited by M. le Prince) to make representations to the King, which induced him to retract his consent, breaking off thus the marriage. Mademoiselle made a terrible uproar, but Puyguilhem, who since the death of his father had taken the name of Comte de Lauzun, made this great sacrifice with good grace, and with more wisdom than belonged to him. He had the company of the hundred gentlemen, with battle-axes, of the King's household, which his father had had, and he had just been made lieutenant-general.

Lauzun was in love with Madame de Monaco, an intimate friend of Madame, and in all her intrigues. He was very jealous of her, and was not pleased with her. One summer's afternoon he went to Saint-Cloud, and found Madame and her Court seated upon the ground, enjoying the air, and Madame de Monaco half lying down, one of her hands open and outstretched. Lauzun played the gallant with the ladies, and turned round so neatly that he placed his heel in the palm of Madame de Monaco, made a pirouette there, and departed. Madame de Monaco had strength enough to utter no cry, no word!

A short time after he did worse. He learnt that the King was on intimate terms with Madame de Monaco, learnt also the hour at which Bontems, the

valet, conducted her, enveloped in a cloak, by a back staircase, upon the landing-place of which was a door leading into the King's cabinet, and in front of it a private cabinet. Lauzun anticipates the hour, and lies in ambush in the private cabinet, fastening it from within with a hook, and sees through the keyhole the King open the door of the cabinet, put the key outside (in the lock) and close the door again. Lauzun waits a little, comes out of his hiding-place, listens at the door in which the King had just placed the key, locks it, and takes out the key, which he throws into the private cabinet, in which he again shuts himself up.

Some time after Bontems and the lady arrive. Much astonished not to find the key in the door of the King's cabinet, Bontems gently taps at the door several times, but in vain; finally so loudly does he tap that the King hears the sound. Bontems says he is there, and asks his Majesty to open, because the key is not in the door. The King replies that he has just put it there. Bontems looks on the ground for it, the King meanwhile trying to open the door from the inside, and finding it double-locked. Of course all three are much astonished and much annoyed; the conversation is carried on through the door, and they cannot determine how this accident has happened. The King exhausts himself in efforts to force the door, in spite of its being double-locked. At last they are obliged to say good-bye through the door, and Lauzun, who hears every word they utter, and who sees them through the keyhole, laughs in his sleeve at their mishap with infinite enjoyment.

CHAPTER CXVII

IN 1670 the King wished to make a triumphant journey with the ladies, under pretext of visiting his possessions in Flanders, accompanied by an army, and by all his household troops, so that the alarm was great in the Low Countries, which he took no pains to appease. He gave the command of all to Lauzun, with the patent of army-general. Lauzun performed the duties of his post with much intelligence, and with extreme gallantry and magnificence. This brilliancy, and this distinguished mark of favour, made Louvois, whom Lauzun in no way spared, think very seriously. He united with Madame de Montespan (who had not pardoned the discovery Lauzun had made, or the atrocious insults he had bestowed upon her), and the two worked so well that they re-awakened in the King's mind recollections of the broken sword, the refusal in the Bastille of the post of captain of the guards, and made his Majesty look upon Lauzun as a man who no longer knew himself, who had suborned Mademoiselle until he had been within an inch of marrying her, and of assuring to himself immense wealth; finally, as a man, very dangerous on account of his audacity, and who had taken it into his head to gain the devotion of the troops by his magnificence, his services to the officers, and by the manner in which he had treated them during the Flanders journey, making himself adored. They made him out criminal for having remained the friend of, and on terms of great intimacy with, the Comtesse de Soissons, driven from the Court and suspected of

crimes. They must have accused Lauzun also of crimes which I have never heard of, in order to procure for him the barbarous treatment they succeeded in subjecting him to.

Their intrigues lasted all the year, 1671, without Lauzun discovering anything by the visage of the King, or that of Madame de Montespan. Both the King and his mistress treated him with their ordinary distinction and familiarity. He was a good judge of jewels (knowing also how to set them well), and Madame de Montespan often employed him in this capacity. One evening, in the middle of November, 1671, he arrived from Paris, where Madame de Montespan had sent him in the morning for some precious stones, and as he was about to enter his chamber he was arrested by the Maréchal de Rochefort, captain of the guards.

Lauzun, in the utmost surprise, wished to know why, to see the King or Madame de Montespan—at least, to write to them; everything was refused him. He was taken to the Bastille, and shortly afterwards to Pignerol, where he was shut up in a low-roofed dungeon. His post of captain of the body-guard was given to M. de Luxembourg, and the government of Berry to the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who, at the death of Guitz, at the passage of the Rhine, 12th June, 1672, was made grand master of the wardrobe.

It may be imagined what was the state of a man like Lauzun, precipitated, in a twinkling, from such a height to a dungeon in the château of Pignerol, without seeing anybody, and ignorant of his crime. He bore up, however, pretty well, but at last fell so ill that he began to think about confession. I have heard him relate that he feared a fictitious priest, and that, consequently, he obstinately insisted upon a Capuchin; and as soon as he came he seized him by the beard,

and tugged at it as hard as he could, on all sides, in order to see that it was not a sham one! He was four or five years in his gaol. Prisoners find employment which necessity teaches them. There were prisoners above him and at the side of him. They found means to speak to him. This intercourse led them to make a hole, well hidden, so as to talk more easily; then to increase it, and visit each other.

The superintendent Fouquet had been enclosed near them ever since December, 1664. He knew by his neighbours (who had found means of seeing him) that Lauzun was under them. Fouquet, who received no news, hoped for some from him, and had a great desire to see him. He had left Lauzun a young man, dawning at the Court, introduced by the Maréchal de Grammont, well received at the house of the Comtesse de Soissons, which the King never quitted, and already looked upon favourably. The prisoners, who had become intimate with Lauzun, persuaded him to allow himself to be drawn up through their hole, in order to see Fouquet in their dungeon. Lauzun was very willing. They met, and Lauzun began relating, accordingly, his fortunes and his misfortunes, to Fouquet. The unhappy superintendent opened wide his ears and eyes when he heard this young Gascon (once only too happy to be welcomed and harboured by the Maréchal de Grammont) talk of having been general of dragoons, captain of the guards, with the patent and functions of army-general! Fouquet no longer knew where he was, believed Lauzun mad, and that he was relating his visions, when he described how he had missed the artillery, and what had passed afterwards thereupon: but he was convinced that madness had reached its climax, and was afraid to be with Lauzun, when he heard him talk of his marriage with Mademoiselle, agreed to by the King, how broken,

and the wealth she had assured to him. This much curbed their intercourse, as far as Fouquet was concerned, for he, believing the brain of Lauzun completely turned, took for fairy tales all the stories the Gascon told him of what had happened in the world, from the imprisonment of the one to the imprisonment of the other.

The confinement of Fouquet was a little relieved before that of Lauzun. His wife and some officers of the château of Pignerol had permission to see him, and to tell him the news of the day. One of the first things he did was to tell them of this poor Puyguilhem, whom he had left young, and on a tolerably good footing for his age, at the Court, and whose head was now completely turned, his madness hidden within the prison walls; but what was his astonishment when they all assured him that what he had heard was perfectly true! He did not return to the subject, and was tempted to believe them all mad together. It was some time before he was persuaded.

In his turn, Lauzun was taken from his dungeon, and had a chamber, and soon after had the same liberty that had been given to Fouquet; finally, they were allowed to see each other as much as they liked. I have never known what displeased Lauzun, but he left Pignerol the enemy of Fouquet, and did him afterwards all the harm he could, and after his death extended his animosity to his family.

During the long imprisonment of Lauzun, Madame de Nogent, one of his sisters, took such care of his revenues that he left Pignerol extremely rich.

Mademoiselle, meanwhile, was inconsolable at this long and harsh imprisonment, and took all possible measures to deliver Lauzun. The King at last resolved to turn this to the profit of the Duc du Maine

and to make Mademoiselle pay dear for the release of her lover. He caused a proposition to be made to her, which was nothing less than to assure to the Duc du Maine, and his posterity after her death, the countdom of Eû, the Duchy of Aumale, and the principality of Domfés! The gift was enormous, not only as regards the value, but the dignity and extent of these three slices. Moreover, she had given the first two to Lauzun, with the Duchy of Saint-Forgeon, and the fine estate of Thiers, in Auvergne, when their marriage was broken off, and she would have been obliged to make him renounce Eû and Aumale before she could have disposed of them in favour of the Duc du Maine. Mademoiselle could not make up her mind to this yoke, or to strip Lauzun of such considerable benefits. She was importuned to the utmost, finally menaced by the ministers, now Louvois, now Colbert. With the latter she was better pleased, because he had always been on good terms with Lauzun, and because he handled her more gently than Louvois, who, an enemy of her lover, always spoke in the harshest terms. Mademoiselle unceasingly felt that the King did not like her, and that he had never pardoned her the Orléans journey, still less her doings at the Bastille, when she fired its cannons upon the King's troops, and saved thus M. le Prince and his people, at the combat of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Feeling, therefore, that the King, hopelessly estranged from her, and consenting to give liberty to Lauzun only from his passion for elevating and enriching his bastards, would not cease to persecute her until she had consented—despairing of better terms, she agreed to the gift, with the most bitter tears and complaints. But it was found that, in order to make valid the renunciation of Lauzun, he must be set at liberty, so that it was pretended he had need of the waters of Bour-

bon, and Madame de Montespan also, in order that they might confer together upon this affair.

Lauzun was taken guarded to Bourbon by a detachment of musketeers, commanded by Maupertuis. Lauzun saw Madame de Montespan at Bourbon; but he was so indignant at the terms proposed to him as the condition of his liberty, that after long disputes he would hear nothing more on the subject, and was reconducted to Pignerol as he had been brought.

This firmness did not suit the King, intent upon the fortune of his well-beloved bastard. He sent Madame de Nogent to Pignerol; then Borin (a friend of Lauzun, and who was mixed up in all his affairs), with menaces and promises. Borin, with great trouble, obtained the consent of Lauzun, and brought about a second journey to Bourbon for him and Madame de Montespan, with the same pretext of the waters. Lauzun was conducted there as before, and never pardoned Maupertuis the severe pedantry of his exactitude. This last journey was made in the autumn of 1680. Lauzun consented to everything. Madame de Montespan returned triumphant. Maupertuis and his musketeers took leave of Lauzun at Bourbon, whence he had permission to go and reside at Angers; and immediately after, this exile was enlarged, so that he had the liberty of all Anjou and Lorraine. The consummation of the affair was deferred until the commencement of February, 1681, in order to give him a greater air of liberty. Thus Lauzun had from Mademoiselle only Saint-Forgeon and Thiers, after having been on the point of marrying her, and of succeeding to all her immense wealth. The Duc du Maine was instructed to make his court to Mademoiselle, who always received him very coldly, and who saw him take her arms, with much vexation, as a mark of his gratitude, in reality for the sake of the honour it brought

him; for the arms were those of Gaston, which the Comte de Toulouse afterwards took, not for the same reason, but under pretext of conformity with his brother; and they have handed them down to their children.

Lauzun, who had been led to expect much more gentle treatment, remained four years in these two provinces, of which he grew as weary as was Mademoiselle at his absence. She cried out in anger against Madame de Montespan and her son; complained loudly that after having been so pitilessly fleeced, Lauzun was still kept removed from her; and made such a stir that at last she obtained permission for him to return to Paris, with entire liberty; on condition, however, that he did not approach within two leagues of any place where the King might be.

Lauzun came, therefore, to Paris, and assiduously visited his benefactors. The weariness of this kind of exile, although so softened, led him into high play, at which he was extremely successful; always a good and sure player, and very straightforward, he gained largely. Monsieur, who sometimes made little visits to Paris, and who played very high, permitted him to join the gambling parties of the Palais Royal, then those of Saint-Cloud. Lauzun passed thus several years, gaining and lending much money very nobly; but the nearer he found himself to the Court, and to the great world, the more insupportable became to him the prohibition he had received.

Finally, being no longer able to bear it, he asked the King for permission to go to England, where high play was much in vogue. He obtained it, and took with him a good deal of money, which secured him an open-armed reception in London, where he was not less successful than in Paris.

James II., then reigning, received Lauzun with dis-

tinction. But the Revolution was already brewing. It burst after Lauzun had been in England eight or ten months. It seemed made expressly for him, by the success he derived from it, as everybody is aware. James II., no longer knowing what was to become of him—betrayed by his favourites and his ministers, abandoned by all his nation, the Prince of Orange master of all hearts, the troops, the navy, and ready to enter London—the unhappy monarch confided to Lauzun what he held most dear—the Queen and the Prince of Wales, whom Lauzun happily conducted to Calais. The Queen at once despatched a courier to the King, in the midst of the compliments of which she insinuated that by the side of her joy at finding herself and her son in security under his protection, was her grief at not daring to bring with her him to whom she owed her safety.

The reply of the King, after much generous and gallant sentiment, was, that he shared this obligation with her, and that he hastened to show it to her, by restoring the Comte de Lauzun to favour.

In effect, when the Queen presented Lauzun to the King, in the Palace of Saint-Germain (where the King, with all the family and all the Court, came to meet her), he treated him as of old, gave him the privilege of the *grandes entrées,* and promised him a lodging at Versailles, which he received immediately after. From that day he always went to Marly, and to Fontainebleau, and, in fact, never after quitted the Court. It may be imagined what was the delight of such an ambitious courtier, so completely re-established in such a sudden and brilliant manner. He had also a lodging in the château of Saint-Germain, chosen as the residence of this fugitive Court, at which King James soon arrived.

Lauzun, like a skilful courtier, made all possible use

of the two Courts, and procured for himself many interviews with the King, in which he received minor commissions. Finally, he played his cards so well that the King permitted him to receive in Notre Dame, at Paris, the Order of the Garter, from the hands of the King of England, accorded to him at his second passage into Ireland the rank of lieutenant-general of his auxiliary army, and permitted at the same time that he should be of the staff of the King of England, who lost Ireland during the same campaign at the battle of the Boyne. He returned into France with the Comte de Lauzun, for whom he obtained letters of the Duke, which were verified at the Parliament in May, 1692. What a miraculous return of fortune! But what a fortune, in comparison with that of marrying Mademoiselle, with the donation of all her prodigious wealth, and the title and dignity of Duke and Peer of Montpensier. What a monstrous pedestal! And with children by this marriage, what a flight might not Lauzun have taken, and who can say where he might have arrived?

CHAPTER CXVIII

I HAVE elsewhere related Lauzun's humours, his notable wanton tricks, and his rare singularity. He enjoyed, during the rest of his long life, intimacy with the King, distinction at the Court, great consideration, extreme abundance, kept up the state of a great nobleman, with one of the most magnificent houses of the Court, and the best table, morning and evening, most honourably frequented, and at Paris the same, after the King's death. All this did not content him. He could only approach the King with outside familiarity; he felt that the mind and the heart of that monarch were on their guard against him, and in an estrangement that not all his art nor all his application could ever overcome. This is what made him marry my sister-in-law, hoping thus to re-establish himself in serious intercourse with the King by means of the army that M. le Maréchal de Lorge commanded in Germany; but his project failed, as has been seen. This is what made him bring about the marriage of the Duc de Lorge with the daughter of Chamillart, in order to reinstate himself by means of that ministry; but without success. This is what made him undertake the journey to Aix-la-Chapelle, under the pretext of the waters, to obtain information which might lead to private interviews with the King, respecting the peace; but he was again unsuccessful. All his projects failed; in fact, he unceasingly sorrowed, and believed himself in profound disgrace—even saying so. He left nothing undone in order to pay his court, at bottom with meanness,

but externally with dignity; and he every year celebrated a sort of anniversary of his disgrace, by extraordinary acts, of which ill-humour and solitude were oftentimes absurdly the fruit. He himself spoke of it, and used to say that he was not rational at the annual return of this epoch, which was stronger than he. He thought he pleased the King by this refinement of attention, without perceiving he was laughed at.

By nature he was extraordinary in everything, and took pleasure in affecting to be more so, even at home, and among his valets. He counterfeited the deaf and the blind, the better to see and hear without exciting suspicion, and diverted himself by laughing at fools, even the most elevated, by holding with them a language which had no sense. His manners were measured, reserved, gentle, even respectful; and from his low and honeyed tongue came piercing remarks, overwhelming by their justice, their force, or their satire, composed of two or three words, perhaps, and sometimes uttered with an air of naïveté or of distraction, as though he was not thinking of what he said. Thus he was feared, without exception, by everybody, and with many acquaintances he had few or no friends, although he merited them by his ardour in seeing everybody as much as he could, and by his readiness in opening his purse. He liked to gather together foreigners of any distinction, and perfectly did the honours of the Court. But devouring ambition poisoned his life; yet he was a very good and useful relative.

During the summer which followed the death of Louis XIV. there was a review of the King's household troops, led by M. le Duc d'Orléans, in the plain by the side of the Bois de Boulogne. Passy, where M. de Lauzun had a pretty house, is on the other side. Madame de Lauzun was there with company,

and I slept there the evening before the review. Madame de Poitiers, a young widow, and one of our relatives, was there too, and was dying to see the review, like a young person who has seen nothing, but who dares not show herself in public in the first months of her mourning.

How she could be taken was discussed in the company, and it was decided that Madame de Lauzun could conduct her a little way, buried in her carriage. In the midst of the gaiety of this party, M. de Lauzun arrived from Paris, where he had gone in the morning. He was told what had just been decided. As soon as he learnt it he flew into a fury, was no longer master of himself, broke off the engagement, almost foaming at the mouth; said the most disagreeable things to his wife in the strongest, the harshest, the most insulting, and the most foolish terms. She gently wept; Madame de Poitiers sobbed outright, and all the company felt the utmost embarrassment. The evening appeared an age, and the saddest refectory repast a gay meal by the side of our supper. He was wild in the midst of the profoundest silence; scarcely a word was said. He quitted the table, as usual, at the fruit, and went to bed. An attempt was made to say something afterwards by way of relief, but Madame de Lauzun politely and wisely stopped the conversation, and brought out cards in order to turn the subject.

The next morning I went to M. de Lauzun, in order to tell him in plain language my opinion of the scene of the previous evening. I had not the time. As soon as he saw me enter he extended his arms, and cried that I saw a madman, who did not deserve my visit, but an asylum; passed the strongest eulogies upon his wife (which assuredly she merited), said he was not worthy of her, and that he ought to

kiss the ground upon which she walked; overwhelmed himself with blame; then, with tears in his eyes, said he was more worthy of pity than of anger; that he must admit to me all his shame and misery; that he was more than eighty years of age; that he had neither children nor survivors; that he had been captain of the guards; that though he might be so again, he should be incapable of the function; that he unceasingly said this to himself, and that yet with all this he could not console himself for having been so no longer during the many years since he had lost his post; that he had never been able to draw the dagger from his heart; that everything which recalled the memory of the past made him beside himself, and that to hear that his wife was going to take Madame de Poitiers to see a review of the body-guards, in which he now counted for nothing, had turned his head, and had rendered him wild to the extent I had seen; that he no longer dared show himself before any one after this evidence of madness; that he was going to lock himself up in his chamber, and that he threw himself at my feet in order to conjure me to go and find his wife, and try to induce her to take pity on and pardon a senseless old man, who was dying with grief and shame. This admission, so sincere and so dolorous to make, penetrated me. I sought only to console him and compose him. The reconciliation was not difficult; we drew him from his chamber, not without trouble, and he evinced during several days as much disinclination to show himself, as I was told, for I went away in the evening, my occupations keeping me very busy.

I have often reflected, apropos of this, upon the extreme misfortune of allowing ourselves to be carried away by the intoxication of the world, and into the formidable state of an ambitious man, whom neither

riches nor comfort, neither dignity acquired nor age, can satisfy, and who, instead of tranquilly enjoying what he possesses, and appreciating the happiness of it, exhausts himself in regrets, and in useless and continual bitterness. But we die as we have lived, and 'tis rare it happens otherwise. This madness respecting the captaincy of the guards so cruelly dominated M. de Lauzun, that he often dressed himself in a blue coat, with silver lace, which, without being exactly the uniform of the captain of the body-guards, resembled it closely, and would have rendered him ridiculous if he had not accustomed people to it, made himself feared, and risen above all ridicule.

With all his scheming and cringing he fell foul of everybody, always saying some biting remark with dove-like gentleness. Ministers, generals, fortunate people and their families, were the most ill-treated. He had, as it were, usurped the right of saying and doing what he pleased; nobody daring to be angry with him. The Grammonts alone were excepted. He always remembered the hospitality and the protection he had received from them at the outset of his life. He liked them; he interested himself in them; he was in respect before them. Old Comte Grammont took advantage of this and revenged the Court by the sallies he constantly made against Lauzun, who never returned them or grew angry, but gently avoided him. He always did a good deal for the children of his sisters.

During the plague the Bishop of Marseilles had much signalised himself by wealth spent and danger incurred. When the plague had completely passed away, M. de Lauzun asked M. le Duc d'Orléans for an abbey for the Bishop. The Regent gave away some livings soon after, and forgot M. de Marseilles. Lauzun pretended to be ignorant of it, and asked M. le

Duc d'Orléans if he had had the goodness to remember him. The Regent was embarrassed. The Duc de Lauzun, as though to relieve him from his embarrassment, said, in a gentle and respectful tone, "Monsieur, he will do better another time," and with this sarcasm rendered the Regent dumb, and went away smiling. The story got abroad, and M. le Duc d'Orléans repaired his forgetfulness by the bishopric of Laon, and upon the refusal of M. de Marseilles to change, gave him a fat abbey.

M. de Lauzun hindered also a promotion of Marshal of France by the ridicule he cast upon the candidates. He said to the Regent, with that gentle and respectful tone he knew so well how to assume, that in case any useless Marshals of France (as he said) were made, he begged his Royal Highness to remember that he was the oldest lieutenant-general of the realm, and that he had had the honour of commanding armies with the patent of general. I have elsewhere related other of his witty remarks. He could not keep them in; envy and jealousy urged him to utter them, and as his bon-mots always went straight to the point, they were always much repeated.

We were on terms of continual intimacy; he had rendered me real solid friendly services of himself, and I paid him all sorts of respectful attentions, and he paid me the same. Nevertheless, I did not always escape his tongue; and on one occasion, he was perhaps within an inch of doing me much injury by it.

The King (Louis XIV.) was declining; Lauzun felt it, and began to think of the future. Few people were in favour with M. le Duc d'Orléans; nevertheless, it was seen that his grandeur was approaching. All eyes were upon him, shining with malignity, consequently upon me, who for a long time had been the sole courtier who remained publicly attached to him,

the sole in his confidence. M. de Lauzun came to dine at my house, and found us at table. The company he saw apparently displeased him; for he went away to Torcy, with whom I had no intimacy, and who was also at table, with many people opposed to M. le Duc d'Orléans, Tallard, among others, and Tessé.

"Monsieur," said Lauzun to Torcy, with a gentle and timid air, familiar to him, "take pity upon me, I have just tried to dine with M. de Saint-Simon. I found him at table, with company; I took care not to sit down with them, as I did not wish to be the *zeste* of the cabal. I have come here to find one."

They all burst out laughing. The remark instantly ran over all Versailles. Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine at once heard it, and nevertheless no sign was anywhere made. To have been angry would only have been to spread it wider: I took the matter as the scratch of an ill-natured cat, and did not allow Lauzun to perceive that I knew it.

Two or three years before his death he had an illness which reduced him to extremity. We were all very assiduous, but he would see none of us, except Madame de Saint-Simon, and her but once. Languet, curé of Saint-Sulpice, often went to him, and discoursed most admirably to him. One day, when he was there, the Duc de la Force glided into the chamber: M. de Lauzun did not like him at all, and often laughed at him. He received him tolerably well, and continued to talk aloud with the curé.

Suddenly he turned to the curé, complimented and thanked him, said he had nothing more valuable to give him than his blessing, drew his arm from the bed, pronounced the blessing, and gave it to him. Then turning to the Duc de la Force, Lauzun said he had always loved and respected him as the head of his house, and that as such he asked him for his blessing.

These two men, the curé and the Duc de la Force, were astonished, could not utter a word. The sick man redoubled his instances. M. de la Force, recovering himself, found the thing so amusing, that he gave his blessing; and in fear lest he should explode, left the room, and came to us in the adjoining chamber, bursting with laughter, and scarcely able to relate what had happened to him.

A moment after, the curé came also, all abroad, but smiling as much as possible, so as to put a good face on the matter. Lauzun knew that he was ardent and skilful in drawing money from people for the building of a church, and had often said he would never fall into his net; he suspected that the worthy curé's assiduities had an interested motive, and laughed at him in giving him only his blessing (which he ought to have received from him), and in perseveringly asking the Duc de la Force for his. The curé, who saw the point of the joke, was much mortified, but, like a sensible man, he was not less frequent in his visits to M. de Lauzun after this; but the patient cut short his visits, and would not understand the language he spoke.

Another day, while he was still very ill, Biron and his wife made bold to enter his room on tiptoe, and kept behind his curtains, out of sight, as they thought; but he perceived them by means of the glass on the chimney-piece. Lauzun liked Biron tolerably well, but Madame Biron not at all; she was, nevertheless, his niece, and his principal heiress; he thought her mercenary, and all her manners insupportable to him. In that he was like the rest of the world. He was shocked by this unscrupulous entrance into his chamber, and felt that, impatient for her inheritance, she came in order to make sure of it, if he should die directly. He wished to make her repent of this, and

to divert himself at her expense. He begins, therefore, to utter aloud, as though believing himself alone, an ejaculatory orison, asking pardon of God for his past life, expressing himself as though persuaded his death was nigh, and saying that, grieved at his inability to do penance, he wishes at least to make use of all the wealth he possesses, in order to redeem his sins, and bequeath that wealth to the hospitals without any reserve; says it is the sole road to salvation left to him by God, after having passed a long life without thinking of the future; and thanks God for this sole resource left him, which he adopts with all his heart!

He accompanied this resolution with a tone so touched, so persuaded, so determined, that Biron and his wife did not doubt for a moment he was going to execute his design, or that they should be deprived of all the succession. They had no desire to spy any more, and went, confounded, to the Duchesse de Lauzun, to relate to her the cruel decree they had just heard pronounced, conjuring her to try and moderate it. Thereupon the patient sent for the notaries, and Madame Biron believed herself lost. It was exactly the design of the testator to produce this idea. He made the notaries wait; then allowed them to enter, and dictated his will, which was a death-blow to Madame de Biron. Nevertheless, he delayed signing it, and finding himself better and better, did not sign it at all. He was much diverted with this farce, and could not restrain his laughter at it, when reestablished. Despite his age, and the gravity of his illness, he was promptly cured and restored to his usual health.

He was internally as strong as a lion, though externally very delicate. He dined and supped very heartily every day of an excellent and very delicate cheer, always with good company, evening and morning; eat-

ing of everything, *gras* and *maigre,* with no choice except that of his taste and no moderation. He took chocolate in the morning, and had always on the table the fruits in season, and biscuits; at other times beer, cider, lemonade, and other similar drinks iced; and as he passed to and fro, ate and drank at this table every afternoon, exhorting others to do the same. In this way he left table or the fruit, and immediately went to bed.

I recollect that once, among others, he ate at my house, after his illness, so much fish, vegetables, and all sorts of things (I having no power to hinder him), that in the evening we quietly sent to learn whether he had not felt the effects of them. He was found at table eating with good appetite.

His gallantry was long faithful to him. Mademoiselle was jealous of it, and that often controlled him. I have heard Madame de Fontenelles (a very enviable woman, of much intelligence, very truthful, and of singular virtue), I have heard her say, that being at Eû with Mademoiselle, M. de Lauzun came there and could not desist from running after the girls; Mademoiselle knew it, was angry, scratched him, and drove him from her presence. The Comtesse de Fiesque reconciled them. Mademoiselle appeared at the end of a long gallery; Lauzun was at the other end, and he traversed the whole length of it on his knees until he reached the feet of Mademoiselle. These scenes, more or less moving, often took place afterwards. Lauzun allowed himself to be beaten, and in his turn soundly beat Mademoiselle; and this happened several times, until at last, tired of each other, they quarrelled once for all and never saw each other again; he kept several portraits of her, however, in his house or upon him, and never spoke of her without much respect. Nobody doubted they had been

secretly married. At her death he assumed a livery almost black, with silver lace; this he changed into white with a little blue upon gold, when silver was prohibited upon liveries.

His temper, naturally scornful and capricious, rendered more so by prison and solitude, had made him a recluse and dreamer; so that having in his house the best of company, he left them to Madame de Lauzun, and withdrew alone all the afternoon, several hours running, almost always without books, for he read only a few works of fancy—a very few—and without sequence; so that he knew nothing except what he had seen, and until the last was exclusively occupied with the Court and the news of the great world. I have a thousand times regretted his radical incapacity to write down what he had seen and done. It would have been a treasure of the most curious anecdotes, but he had no perseverance, no application. I have often tried to draw from him some morsels. Another misfortune. He began to relate; in the recital names occurred of people who had taken part in what he wished to relate. He instantly quitted the principal object of the story in order to hang on to one of these persons, and immediately after to some other person connected with the first, then to a third, in the manner of the romances; he threaded through a dozen histories at once, which made him lose ground and drove him from one to the other without ever finishing anything; and with this his words were very confused, so that it was impossible to learn anything from him or retain anything he said. For the rest, his conversation was always constrained by caprice or policy; and was amusing only by starts, and by the malicious witticisms which sprung out of it. A few months after his last illness, that is to say, when he was more than ninety years of age, he broke in his horses and

made a hundred *passades* at the Bois de Boulogne (before the King, who was going to the Muette), upon a colt he had just trained, surprising the spectators by his address, his firmness, and his grace. These details about him might go on for ever.

His last illness came on without warning, almost in a moment, with the most horrible of all ills, a cancer in the mouth. He endured it to the last with incredible patience and firmness, without complaint, without spleen, without the slightest repining; he was insupportable to himself. When he saw his illness somewhat advanced, he withdrew into a little apartment (which he had hired with this object in the interior of the Convent of the Petits Augustins, into which there was an entrance from his house) to die in repose there, inaccessible to Madame de Biron and every other woman, except his wife, who had permission to go in at all hours, followed by one of her attendants.

Into this retreat Lauzun gave access only to his nephews and brothers-in-law, and to them as little as possible. He thought only of profiting by his terrible state, of giving all his time to the pious discourses of his confessor and of some of the pious people of the house, and to holy reading; to everything, in fact, which best could prepare him for death. When we saw him, no disorder, nothing lugubrious, no trace of suffering,—politeness, tranquillity, conversation but little animated, indifference to what was passing in the world, speaking of it little and with difficulty; little or no morality, still less talk of his state; and this uniformity, so courageous and so peaceful, was sustained full four months until the end; but during the last ten or twelve days he would see neither brothers-in-law nor nephews, and as for his wife, promptly dismissed her. He received all the sacraments very edifyingly, and preserved his senses to the last moment. The

morning of the day during the night of which he died, he sent for Biron, said he had done for him all that Madame de Lauzun had wished; that by his testament he gave him all his wealth, except a trifling legacy to the son of his other sister, and some recompenses to his domestics; that all he had done for him since his marriage, and what he did in dying, he (Biron) entirely owed to Madame de Lauzun; that he must never forget the gratitude he owed her; that he prohibited him, by the authority of uncle and testator, ever to cause her any trouble or annoyance, or to have any process against her, no matter of what kind. It was Biron himself who told me this the next day, in the terms I have given. M. de Lauzun said adieu to him in a firm tone, and dismissed him. He prohibited, and reasonably, all ceremony; he was buried at the Petits Augustins; he had nothing from the King but the ancient company of the battle-axes, which was suppressed two days after. A month before his death he had sent for Dillon (charged here with the affairs of King James, and a very distinguished officer general), to whom he surrendered his collar of the Order of the Garter, and a George of onyx, encircled with perfectly beautiful and large diamonds, to be sent back to the Prince.

I perceive at last, that I have been very prolix upon this man, but the extraordinary singularity of his life, and my close connexion with him, appear to me sufficient excuses for making him known, especially as he did not sufficiently figure in general affairs to expect much notice in the histories that will appear. Another sentiment has extended my recital. I am drawing near a term I fear to reach, because my desires cannot be in harmony with the truth; they are ardent, consequently painful, because the other sentiment is terrible, and cannot in any way be palliated; the terror of arriv-

ing there has stopped me—nailed me where I was—frozen me.

It will easily be seen that I speak of the death (and what a death!) of M. le Duc d'Orléans; and this frightful recital, especially after such a long attachment (it lasted all his life, and will last all mine), penetrates me with terror and with grief for him. The Regent had said, when he died he should like to die suddenly: I shudder to my very marrow, with the horrible suspicion that God, in His anger, granted his desire.

CHAPTER CXIX

THE new château of Meudon, completely furnished, had been restored to me since the return of the Court to Versailles, just as I had had it before the Court came to Meudon. The Duc and Duchesse d'Humières were with us there, and good company. One morning towards the end of October, 1723, the Duc d'Humières wished me to conduct him to Versailles, to thank M. le Duc d'Orléans.

We found the Regent dressing in the vault he used as his wardrobe. He was upon his chair among his valets, and one or two of his principal officers. His look terrified me. I saw a man with hanging head, a purple-red complexion, and a heavy stupid air. He did not even see me approach. His people told him. He slowly turned his head towards me, and asked me with a thick tongue what brought me. I told him. I had intended to pass him to come into the room where he dressed himself, so as not to keep the Duc d'Humières waiting; but I was so astonished that I stood stock still.

I took Simiane, first gentleman of his chamber, into a window, and testified to him my surprise and my fear at the state in which I saw M. le Duc d'Orléans.

Simiane replied that for a long time he had been so in the morning; that to-day there was nothing extraordinary about him, and that I was surprised simply because I did not see him at those hours; that nothing would be seen when he had shaken himself a little in dressing. There was still, however, much to be seen

when he came to dress himself. The Regent received the thanks of the Duc d'Humières with an astonished and heavy air; he who always was so gracious and so polite to everybody, and who so well knew how to express himself, scarcely replied to him! A moment after, M. d'Humières and I withdrew. We dined with the Duc de Gesvres, who led him to the King to thank his Majesty.

The condition of M. le Duc d'Orléans made me make many reflections. For a very long time the Secretaries of State had told me that during the first hours of the morning they could have made him pass anything they wished, or sign what might have been the most hurtful to him. It was the fruit of his suppers. Within the last year he himself had more than once told me that Chirac doctored him unceasingly, without effect; because he was so full that he sat down to table every evening without hunger, without any desire to eat, though he took nothing in the morning, and simply a cup of chocolate between one and two o'clock in the day (before everybody), it being then the time to see him in public. I had not kept dumb with him thereupon, but all my representations were perfectly useless. I knew moreover, that Chirac had continually told him that the habitual continuance of his suppers would lead him to apoplexy, or dropsy on the chest, because his respiration was interrupted at times; upon which he had cried out against this latter malady, which was a slow, suffocating, annoying preparation for death, saying that he preferred apoplexy, which surprised and which killed at once, without allowing time to think of it!

Another man, instead of crying out against this kind of death with which he was menaced, and of preferring another, allowing him no time for reflection, would have thought about leading a sober, healthy,

and decent life, which, with the temperament he had, would have procured him a very long time, exceeding agreeable in the situation—very probably durable—in which he found himself; but such was the double blindness of this unhappy prince.

I was on terms of much intimacy with M. de Fréjus, and since, in default of M. le Duc d'Orléans, there must be another master besides the King, until he could take command, I preferred this prelate to any other. I went to him, therefore, and told him what I had seen this morning of the state of M. le Duc d'Orléans. I predicted that his death must soon come, and that it would arrive suddenly, without warning. I counselled Fréjus, therefore, to have all his arrangements ready with the King, in order to fill up the Regent's place of prime minister when it should become vacant. M. de Fréjus appeared very grateful for the advice, but was measured and modest as though he thought the post much above him!

On the 22nd of December, 1723, I went from Meudon to Versailles to see M. le Duc d'Orléans; I was three-quarters of an hour with him in his cabinet, where I had found him alone. We walked to and fro there, talking of affairs of which he was going to give an account to the King that day. I found no difference in him, his state was, as usual, languid and heavy, as it had been for some time, but his judgment was clear as ever. I immediately returned to Meudon, and chatted there some time with Madame de Saint-Simon on arriving. On account of the season we had little company. I left Madame de Saint-Simon in her cabinet, and went into mine.

About an hour after, at most, I heard cries and a sudden uproar. I ran out and I found Madame de Saint-Simon quite terrified, bringing to me a groom of the Marquis de Ruffec, who wrote to me from Ver-

sailles, that M. le Duc d'Orléans was in a apoplectic fit. I was deeply moved, but not surprised; I had expected it, as I have shown, for a long time. I impatiently waited for my carriage, which was a long while coming, on account of the distance of the new château from the stables. I flung myself inside, and was driven as fast as possible.

At the park gate I met another courier from M. de Ruffec, who stopped me, and said it was all over. I remained there more than half an hour absorbed in grief and reflection. At the end I resolved to go to Versailles, and shut myself up in my rooms; I learnt there the particulars of the event.

M. le Duc d'Orléans had everything prepared to go and work with the King. While waiting the hour, he chatted with Madame Falari, one of his mistresses. They were close to each other, both seated in arm-chairs, when suddenly he fell against her, and never from that moment had the slightest glimmer of consciousness.

La Falari, frightened as much as may be imagined, cried with all her might for help, and redoubled her cries. Seeing that nobody replied, she supported as best she could this poor prince upon the contiguous arms of the two chairs, ran into the grand cabinet, into the chamber, into the ante-chambers, without finding a soul; finally, into the court and the lower gallery. It was the hour at which M. le Duc d'Orléans worked with the King, an hour when people were sure no one would come and see him, and that he had no need of them, because he ascended to the King's room by the little staircase from his vault, that is to say his wardrobe. At last La Falari found somebody, and sent the first who came to hand for help. Chance, or rather providence, had arranged this sad event at a time when everybody was ordinarily away upon business or vis-

its, so that a full half-hour elapsed before doctor or surgeon appeared, and about as long before any domestics of M. le Duc d'Orléans could be found.

As soon as the faculty had examined the Regent, they judged his case hopeless. He was hastily extended upon the floor, and bled, but he gave not the slightest sign of life, do what they might to him. In an instant, after the first announcement, everybody flocked to the spot; the great and the little cabinet were full of people. In less than two hours all was over, and little by little the solitude became as great as the crowd had been. As soon as assistance came, La Falari flew away and gained Paris as quickly as possible.

La Vrillière was one of the first who learnt of the attack of apoplexy. He instantly ran and informed the King and the Bishop of Fréjus. Then M. le Duc, like a skilful courtier, resolved to make the best of his time; he at once ran home and drew up at all hazards the patent appointing M. le Duc prime minister, thinking it probable that that prince would be named. Nor was he deceived. At the first intelligence of apoplexy, Fréjus proposed M. le Duc to the King, having probably made his arrangements in advance. M. le Duc arrived soon after, and entered the cabinet where he saw the King, looking very sad, his eyes red and tearful.

Scarcely had he entered than Fréjus said aloud to the King, that in the loss he had sustained by the death of M. le Duc d'Orléans (whom he very briefly eulogised), his Majesty could not do better than beg M. le Duc, there present, to charge himself with everything, and accept the post of prime minister M. le Duc d'Orléans had filled. The King, without saying a word, looked at Fréjus, and consented by a sign of the head, and M. le Duc uttered his thanks.

La Vrillière, transported with joy at the prompt policy he had followed, had in his pocket the form of an oath taken by the prime minister, copied from that taken by M. le Duc d'Orléans, and proposed to Fréjus to administer it immediately. Fréjus proposed it to the King as a fitting thing, and M. le Duc instantly took it. Shortly after, M. le Duc went away; the crowd in the adjoining rooms augmented his suite, and in a moment nothing was talked of but M. le Duc.

M. le Duc de Chartres (the Regent's son), very awkward, but a libertine, was at Paris with an opera dancer he kept. He received the courier which brought him the news of the apoplexy, and on the road (to Versailles), another with the news of death. Upon descending from his coach, he found no crowd, but simply the Duc de Noailles, and De Guiche, who very *apertement* offered him their services, and all they could do for him. He received them as though they were begging-messengers whom he was in a hurry to get rid of, bolted upstairs to his mother, to whom he said he had just met two men who wished to bamboozle him, but that he had not been such a fool as to let them. This remarkable evidence of intelligence, judgment, and policy, promised at once all that this prince has since performed. It was with much trouble he was made to comprehend that he had acted with gross stupidity; he continued, nevertheless, to act as before.

He was not less of a cub in the interview I shortly afterwards had with him. Feeling it my duty to pay a visit of condolence to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, although I had not been on terms of intimacy with her for a long while, I sent a message to her to learn whether my presence would be agreeable. I was told that Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans would be

very glad to see me. I accordingly immediately went to her.

I found her in bed, with a few ladies and her chief officers around, and M. le Duc de Chartres making decorum do double duty for grief. As soon as I approached her she spoke to me of the grievous misfortune—not a word of our private differences. I had stipulated thus. M. le Duc de Chartres went away to his own rooms. Our dragging conversation I put an end to as soon as possible.

From Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans I went to M. le Duc de Chartres. He occupied the room his father had used before being Regent. They told me he was engaged. I went again three times during the same morning. At the last his *valet de chambre* was ashamed, and apprised him of my visit, in despite of me. He came across the threshold of the door of his cabinet, where he had been occupied with some very common people; they were just the sort of people suited to him.

I saw a man before me stupefied and dumfounded, not afflicted, but so embarrassed that he knew not where he was. I paid him the strongest, the clearest, the most energetic of compliments, in a loud voice. He took me, apparently, for some repetition of the Ducs de Guiche and de Noailles, and did not do me the honour to reply one word.

I waited some moments, and seeing that nothing would come out of the mouth of this image, I made my reverence and withdrew, he advancing not one step to conduct me, as he ought to have done, all along his apartment, but reburying himself in his cabinet. It is true that in retiring I cast my eyes upon the company, right and left, who appeared to me much surprised. I went home very weary of dancing attendance at the château.

The death of M. le Duc d'Orléans made a great sensation abroad and at home; but foreign countries rendered him incomparably more justice, and regretted him much more, than the French. Although foreigners knew his feebleness, and although the English had strangely abused it, their experience had not the less persuaded them of the range of his mind, of the greatness of his genius and of his views, of his singular penetration, of the sagacity and address of his policy, of the fertility of his expedients and of his resources, of the dexterity of his conduct under all changes of circumstances and events, of his clearness in considering objects and combining things; of his superiority over his ministers, and over those that various powers sent to him; of the exquisite discernment he displayed in investigating affairs; of his learned ability in immediately replying to everything when he wished. The majority of our Court did not regret him, however. The life he had led displeased the Church people; but more still, the treatment they had received from his hands.

The day after death, the corpse of M. le Duc d'Orléans was taken from Versailles to Saint-Cloud, and the next day the ceremonies commenced. His heart was carried from Saint-Cloud to the Val de Grace by the Archbishop of Rouen, chief almoner of the defunct Prince. The burial took place at Saint-Denis, the funeral procession passing through Paris, with the greatest pomp. The obsequies were delayed until the 12th of February. M. le Duc de Chartres became Duc d'Orléans.

After this event, I carried out a determination I had long resolved on. I appeared before the new masters of the realm as seldom as possible—only, in fact, upon such occasions where it would have been inconsistent with my position to stop away. My situation at the

Court had totally changed. The loss of the dear Prince, the Duc de Bourgogne, was the first blow I had received. The loss of the Regent was the second. But what a wide gulf separated these two men!

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